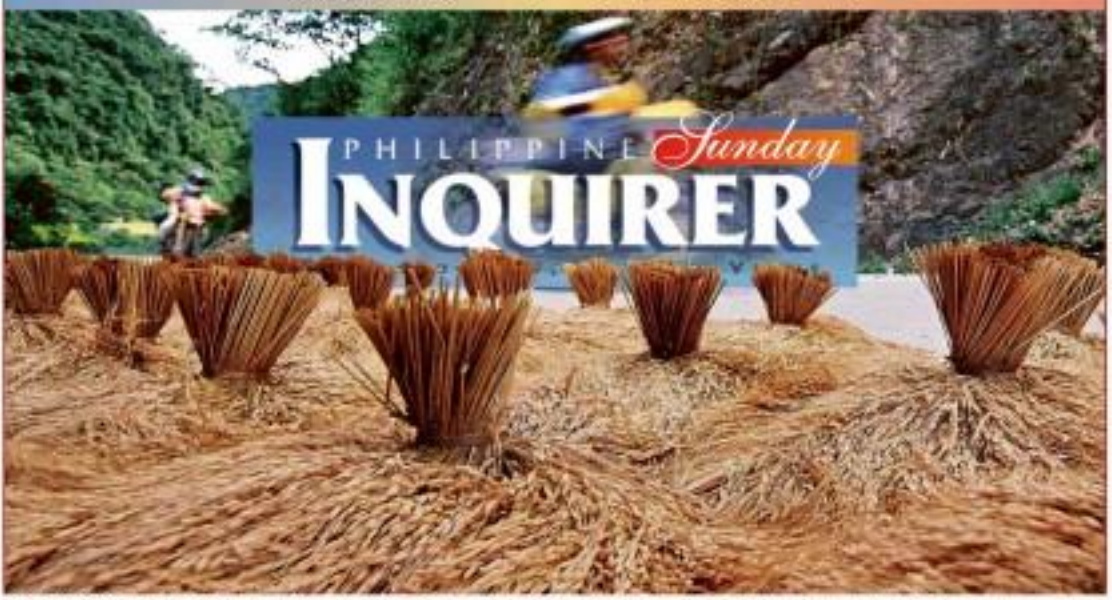
Sunday, September 19, 2010 ** 14 sections / Vol. 25 / No. 283 P20

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER



MOUNTAIN WONDER Upland palay is dried by the roadside in Hungduan, Ifugao. Rice grown in the Cordillera has been directed at a US market for the past four years. Report on Page B2.

Binay mission on hold

RP to send De Lima report to Chinese embassy

By Norman Bordadora and Marlon Ramos

THE REPORT of the government fact-finding panel on the Aug. 23 hostage crisis will be released to the Chinese government through its embassy in Manila, Communications Strategy Secretary Ricky Carandang said yesterday.

Carandang told reporters that he spoke with Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo on Friday night, and was told that a copy of the report would be "transmitted to Beijing through the embassy" either yesterday or tomorrow.

"The President said he wants the report released at the soonest possible time. So it will be transmitted to the embassy, then released to the public," Carandang said.

The Incident Investigation and Review Committee (IIRC) chaired by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima submitted its 83-page report to the President on Friday. It recommended that

BINAY, A6

'Dear Mr. President' letters seek free education

By Terra Quimpando

IN TIGER Antipolo City neighborhood, 10-year-old classmates Romeo Garay and Raimund Lapitan would at times wonder why some of their playmates did not go to school.

"We pity them," said Lapitan, a fifth grader at Jesus Cabarrus Elementary School in the city.

"They don't go to school. They are not learning anything," said Garay in Filipino.

That's why when given the chance to address one request to President Aquino, the two students had the same wish: Free education for all.

"Like her, I am asking for free education because other poor children can't go to school," Garay said.

From free education and better facilities to sex education and even Wi-Fi access, students from around

DEAR, A11

TGIF: No homework on weekends–DepEd

By Terra Quimpando

IT'S TGIF (Thank God, it's Friday) for public elementary students as the Department of Education (DepEd) has prohibited their teachers from giving homework during the weekend.

DepEd Memorandum No. 392, issued on Sept. 16, ordered teachers to avoid giving assignments to students over the weekend so they could bond with their families.

"No homework/assignments shall be given during weekends [so] pupils can enjoy their childhood and spend quality time with their parents without being bur-

TGIF, B4

FIELD OF DREAMS II

Smokey's diamond in the rough rises

By Calvin Fierro and Mark Gonzales
Inquirer.net

WHENEVER HE CAN, 15-year-old Roman Arnold Leonardo visits a flattened patch of garbage land and helps out in a construction activity that has been going on for quite some time.

Sometimes Leonardo just comes to watch. Mostly, however, he is driven by the urge to protect the area. "We want to guard this field all the time," he said.

The field used to be a small part of the infamous Smokey Mountain dump in Tondo, Manila.

A year ago, representatives of Gawad Kalinga and Little League Philippines managed to convince government and private sector officials to send trucks of gravel and soil for use in

SMOKEY'S, A11

DIAMOND-BOYS Aaclo Ambrosio and Rosio Rolox, who both learned to play baseball last year, couldn't be happier now that they finally have a decent field to play in.

Prison break: Laughter sets high-risk inmates free

By Mike Navalo

IT'S PROBABLY the kind of laugh you wouldn't want to hear—a ghoulish, macabre guffaw that sends a chill to the spine.

For a few moments last Friday, the special intensive care area (Sica) of the Metro Manila District Jail (MMDJ) in Camp Bagong Diwa bellowed with laughs—from hearty cackles to fake, nightmarish growls—after jail officials brought laughter yoga to the detainees who are accused of being members of terrorist organizations.

Though most of the inmates appeared to have reservations about the

PRISON BREAK, A6

Servathon: Volunteers touch lives, are heroes for a day

HANDS ON Children of the Development Endeavors for Organized Sustainability Foundation Inc. join hands for a painting for a classroom.

By Tina G. Santos and Jeannette I. Andrade

MORE THAN a thousand volunteers from some 20 corporations became heroes for a day, helping people in the marginalized and impoverished sectors of Metro Manila.

They gathered yesterday for the 9th Hands On Manila Servathon held at the SMX in Pasay City, to help 11,800 students and 120 teachers in four public schools; 480 children in five shelters; 80 patients and 85,000 residents of 29 barangays.

Servathon is an annual community program of Hands On Manila (HOM) Foundation.

HOM chair and president Myrna Myrna Ong expressed awe at the commitment of the participants to "being the change" and making a difference in these communities.

"Servathon is our own way of rekindling the classic Filipino trait of bayanihan," she said in a statement. "Corporate volunteerism may seem unlikely in this day and age, but we at HOM believe there are still companies willing to make a difference in people's lives by engaging in corporate social responsibility. That's what Servathon 2010 is all about."

Servathon 2010 chair and HOM board trustee Nenet Schmid said this year's volunteers surpassed last year's numbers.

She said as the number of participants keeps growing, so does Servathon's significance.

Schmid noted that at least 30 volunteers were all under 20 and called them "the new generation of change agents."

SERVATHON, A15

• **6 suspected** of planning attack linked to Pope's visit arrested in London WORLD / A22 • **Ateneo's men** help 'Ondoy' victims METRO / A15 • **An 'Aswang'** in Athens and other reflections GLOBAL PINOY / A17 • **Floods?** Try Maguindanao's unsinkable boy ADVOCS / A9 • **Thumbs up,** thumbs down: Does Shalani look heartbroken? • Design team of Budji Layug and Royal Pineda contemporize a Filipino institution • Your bipolar friend–the misunderstood SUNDAY LIFESTYLE • **How to** set up a business that sells like 'bilungka' • Neri Colmenares: From victim to congressman SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE • **Ryan Reynolds:** Life with Scarlett Johansson, 'Green Lantern,' being 'Buried' ENTERTAINMENT • **Cordillera organic** rice a strong market at home SUNDAY BIZ

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

6/49	
2nd	21 17
3rd	26 28
4th	19 30
SUERTRES	
2nd	8 5 5
3rd	8 0 8
4th	8 8 7

SIX DIGIT	
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4-NUMBER	
	7 11 23 24 38 34
	P5,342,876.00
6/55 GRAND LOTTO	
	8 12 13 16 34 54
	P161,835,856.00

COA: Gov't shortchanged in gas project

Says Malampaya service contractors didn't pay ₱53.1B from sales proceeds

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE GOVERNMENT is being shortchanged in the Malampaya Natural Gas Project.

The Commission on Audit has found that the government lost ₱53.140 billion between 2003 and 2009 from its share of the net proceeds from the sale of natural gas and condensates from the Malampaya project.

The state-owned Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) Exploration Corp. and the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) Energy Development Corp. were supposed to receive the government's share of the proceeds, but the two companies failed to remit the amount to the National Treasury.

The COA said the two companies should remit the amount to the Bureau of the Treasury, which is tasked to collect the government's share.

The COA noted that the two companies failed to remit the amount because they were waiting for the Department of Energy (DOE) to issue a policy on the matter.

The COA said the DOE should have issued the policy within 30 days after the effectivity of Republic Act No. 9513 or the Renewable Energy Act of 2008

Andal sent me to seek Dureza's help, ex-ARMM official admits

DAVAO CITY—Former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) official Muslimin Sema said he was told by Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr. that Andal Ampatuan Jr. had sent him to then President Macapagal-Arroyo's Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Jesus Dureza to ask for help regarding the charges he and his sons were facing in connection with the Maguindanao massacre.

"It is [no] more that I was sent to Secretary Dureza because we're friends," Sema said, adding that he was also a member of the ARMM regional agrarian reform undersecretary, quoted Andal Jr. as saying.

Sema said he was told by Ampatuan on Friday that Ampatuan wanted to know if Dureza would be able to help in quashing the murder charges filed against him, his sons and some relatives.

Sema said he went to see Dureza several times at his home here on orders of the Ampatuan patriarch.

He said in all the meetings, Dureza had told him that he would do anything about it.

"He said he could not help the Ampatuans in the pending cases. He said these fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice," Sema said.

The only promise that Dureza made, Sema said, was to "give assistance if there were other incidents of harassing of the Ampatuan properties by unknown persons."

Shortly after Andal Sr. and his sons were arrested, soldiers targeted their properties in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao.

Close friends

Asked to explain how he came to know Dureza, Sema said he and the former Palace official were close friends long before the Maguindanao massacre took place.

He said even then 1st Lt. Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chair Ameroi Hashim recognized his friendship with Dureza when the former asked him to arrange... through the former Army official—the hospitalization of his brother Hadji Kamo.

Sema said it was also the same close friendship that made it "easier" for the murder charges against the Ampatuan clan.

He said in all the meetings, no money changed hands and that Dureza never got a centavo from the Ampatuan patriarch.

State witness Lakmudin Sakiao had said Dureza received P30 million from Andal Sr.

"I [my] Secretary Dureza became [personally known that he never received any money from the Ampatuans. I should know because I was the one tasked by Datu Andal to meet Dureza several times. Dureza even immediately declined to help," Sema said.

When Sakiao's testimony was made public, Sema said Dureza immediately called him up.

"He awkwardly asked me that maybe I had received something intended for him but kept it for myself," he said.

Sema said he could not have possibly received money from Andal Sr. in behalf of Dureza and not give it to him.

"I told Secretary Dureza that something serious would have already happened to me if this was what actually happened," he said.

Dureza, in a separate statement, also maintained he did not receive money from the Ampatuan patriarch. "[This is] another malicious and false accusation," he said.

Dureza admitted that he visited the Ampatuan patriarch at Camp Panacan here but it was only after "media [reports]" asked him to verify reports he had been watching given special treatment. *Dennis Jay Santos, reporter Mindanao*

Ang to gov't: Want to stamp out jueteng? Strengthen STL

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NEW SAN JOSE BUILDERS, INC.

Isabel Terraces:
Your home amidst the drama of nature

By Michelle Velez

Imagine your dream home nestled in a beautiful suburbia that provides a breathtaking view of the mountains, and then the whole Metro Manila is laid out perfectly right before your eyes. Such beauty, where the exciting vibes of the metro meets the exquisite tranquility of the rural life, can now be achieved with Isabel Terraces, the newest venture of New San Jose Builders in a Mediterranean inspired community in Montalban, Rizal.

With the promise of waking up in the morning with the glorious sunrise views from the Montalban hills to start your day, Isabel Terraces serves as the crown of the crop of Metro Manila hills communities, that provides good options for everyone's preferred living condition. The location is a convenient link to the urban needs of the residents as it is only a 25-minute travel from Quezon City circle. Furthermore, it has designed state-of-the-art amenities like illustrious parks and playgrounds, wide concrete roads for your driving and walking pleasures, and a landscaped open space that will make you better appreciate living so close to nature. A lush tree-lined boulevard will be the ultimate highway to Isabel Terraces, well-lit for your comfort and convenience.

The whole project is specially designed to provide all the basic necessities that one looks for in their dream houses. Security is topnotch, with vigilant security guards stationed in the entrance gate and sturdy perimeter fences are built to provide boundaries and protection. Also, a centralized water system with elevated water tanks will ensure that the water supply among residents is regularly and efficiently distributed.

A big chunk of the property will be also dedicated to a sports complex and events venue place designed for built to provide a more harmonious and socially conducive environment for all residents. It aims to create a supportive and highly favorable community that will be the breeding ground of great relationships and quality living conditions in the neighborhood. There will be a commercial arcade and a series of commercial strips on the strip along the main boulevard.

Medium-rise condos are also in the offing at the top of the more than 100-hectare property, which shall capture the majestic view of the mountains.

"Isabel Terraces is the next volume of New San Jose Builders' horizontal projects," said John Foronda, Isabel Terraces project director. New San Jose Builders, Inc.'s core strengths is its vertical integration and Isabel Terraces serves as a big shot to its pioneering horizontal success. The properties are highly regarded homes for people who want to have the option of being close to Metro Manila while enjoying life in the suburbs. "We provide a good option for a good residential investment because living here lets you get away with the most common problems of living in the city—congestion, bad traffic, congested areas and pollution.

"Also, we get to offer the most beautiful houses at the most affordable price. It is when luxury and beauty finally intertwines with value for money," Foronda added.

The new San Jose Builders Inc. has a robust portfolio of premier high-rise condominiums in Metro Manila and prime sustainable housing complexes. It has a credibility track record spanning 24 years of quality and pioneering projects that forward on making every Filipino's dream of owning a home come true.

"Living the good life need not have a big price tag stamped on it," Foronda said. "When you live in your home amidst the drama of nature (on the top of the mountains), you get a bigger picture of living to appreciate. And it does not have to cost you heaven and earth to get it, for quality should be affordable," he added.

For more information and free tripping to view the model homes, please call Isabel Terraces at 415-9575, 468-5969 or email at isabelterraces@yahoo.com

FEAST OF PENAFRANCIA

Thousands of devotees join the procession of Our Lady of Peñafrancia as it travels out of the Cathedral in Naga City on the Naga River Saturday for the annual fluvial procession celebrating 300 years of devotion to the patron saint of Bicolandia. —ARMANDO DIAZ

Fil-Chinese community in Baguio seeks healing

By Desiree Caluza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Members of the Chinese-Filipino community flooded 80 paper boats on Burnham Lake on Friday night as a symbol of their desire for the healing of the wounds created by the Aug. 23 hostage crisis in Manila.

"The incident [is] so too much hatred. Every day has been a struggle for both Filipinos and Chinese. We need to cope and comfort each other. We need to move on and learn from the incident," said Zhang Qi, a supervisor at the Baguio Patriotic School, a Chinese-Filipino private school.

Dexter Ng, president of the Baguio Filipino Commerce Association and a local businessman, said they floated the paper boats as a way of paying their respects to the eight Hong Kong tourists who were killed.

"We are here as a united community in praying for forgiveness [from the] families of the victims. We are floating these paper boats ... [to remember] those who passed on with the prayer that they may rest in peace," he said.

Miguel Ricardo Leung, vice president of the student government of the Baguio City National High School, also offered prayers for the victims and their families and expressed hope that the Chinese people would not resent Filipinos.

The Baguio City council passed a resolution last month expressing its sympathy for the bereaved Hong Kong families.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan said "what happened will never affect our relationship with the Chinese-Filipino community here."

"They were with us when the exodus was approved by the council. This is the best way to challenge us in strengthen our relationship with the Chinese people and to send [our message of] peace," Domogan said.

Dr. Charles Cheng, who coauthored a book on the history of Chinese-Filipinos in Baguio, said the Philippines and China should look back on the history of their trade and diplomatic relations to help in the healing process.

Binay mission on hold; RP to send report to Chinese embassy

From page A1

charges be brought against 12 persons in a planned flight for the bungled operation that ended in the killing of eight Hong Kong tourists by a disgruntled ex-cop, who was also shot dead by police.

Carandang said it would take too long for the report to be published if an earlier-planned delegation of Philippine officials were to take it to Beijing and then to Hong Kong.

"If we're going to wait for them to formally transmit the report, it would take too long as it would be after [Surendy] goes back from the US," he said.

The high-level delegation is composed of Vice President Jejomar Binay, Mr. Aquino's spokesperson Edwin Lacierda, and Bautista, who is in accompany Mr. Aquino to New York on his first trip abroad as President on Sept. 19-26.

No schedule yet

Asked if the delegation would still proceed with its mission, Carandang said: "As far as I know, it will push through."

But it will have to wait until Bautista's return from the United States, he said.

In an ambush interview yesterday with the reporters, Vice President Binay said the important thing was to maintain good relations between the Philippines and China.

"I still have to see the final report. We will wait for Malacañang's instructions and coordinate with Chinese officials before we proceed to Hong Kong. Until now, there is no time frame," he said.

Binay said the delegation had "given its word to (to the Chinese ambassador that we will) give them a copy of the (final) report, and we'll surely fulfill that promise."

"The question is if they can really (to receive the report). I think the important thing is the measures how we would proceed to," he said.

He stressed that the hostage crisis that embarrassed the Philippines before the world was "an isolated case" and "not a political thing."

"It was done by one man and not by the Filipino people," he said. "In time goes by I think there will be realization (that this is just an) extraordinary case. The normal relationship, (I think, has) passed."

Binay said "both the Philippines and Hong Kong should move on."

"We belong in the Southeast Asian region [and] we must maintain our good bilateral relations," he said, adding:

"It's a natural thing that they would be angry (initially) and we respect that.

"What I hope to happen after (the episode) is to maintain our good bilateral relations with China."

Transparency

Carandang noted that "some people are asking why we're giving (the report) to the Chinese government) first."

This is partly ... out of courtesy to (host, as some of their nationals died)," he said. "There was an agreement at the beginning of the process that we will be transparent, and that we will share the results (of the investigation) with them."

Carandang dismissed speculation of a whitewash of the investigation results.

"There were questions as to whether (how) would be a whitewash," he said. "We (are will let) it (whitewash if the report is being given to a foreign government. The bottom line is transparency."

In a radio interview over state-run dzRB radio, Lacierda indicated that Mr. Aquino was focusing his attention on the IRR) report even when he was practically on the eve of his first foreign trip that will later this, addressing the United Nations General Assembly.

"The US trip has been planned a few months in advance. More or less, President Aquino has been preparing for that. So he's going to do there," Lacierda said.

"In the meantime, the IRR report came out [on Friday]. He's reading it. I suppose that's what he's giving attention to tonight and ... Anyway, he will have time to go over the speech-es, go over the briefers, on the way to the United States," Lacierda said.

Prison break: Laughter sets high-risk inmates free

From page A1

exercise, some gamely joined in the yoga session which lasted for about an hour.

They said afterwards that it was a form of "escape" from a place of despair.

"I felt relieved, as if I did not have any problems," said Hajid Ulfane, accused of taking part in the Spanish kidnapping and hostage-taking.

"I felt (that) I was free," he said, adding that "we should do this again."

Pedro Trinidad, the founder of Pinoy Laughter Yoga, was invited to conduct the exercises by the jail warden.

According to Trinidad, it was the first time he was conducting laughter yoga with inmates of the Sta Ibolloy which is reserved for detainees deemed to be "high-risk."

He has conducted laughter yoga sessions in other facilities of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

Terror, massacre suspects

Among those confined at Sta Ibolloy are members of Ilu Abu Sayyaf basic group, the Najah Sahiman terror group, and the communist New People's Army (NPA), including some of the "Morong 43," a group of health workers who were arrested last February on suspicion of being NPA members.

"Before going down to do the laughter yoga session, I felt a lot of anxiety and fear because I might say something that may contrary to their beliefs," Trinidad said, noting that most of the inmates practiced Islam, and were of varying ideologies.

Some of the inmates' misdemeanors did manifest during the exercises, particularly when they were asked to shout "Peace" in chorus. They clapped in sync with Trinidad, who was leading the chant, but most did not utter the word.

A couple of the participants were even heard good-naturedly chanting "Allahu Akbar (only for an Islamic)."

The instructor said changes could be made to the exercises, to suit the inmates' needs better.

The inmates did deep breathing exercises, a fundamental part of the session prior to the laughter yoga proper. The reorientation yoga started, launched in India in 1995, combines laughter with traditional yoga breathing and postures.

No photos

The inquirer was allowed to cover the laughter yoga session on the condition that no photos would be taken as the MMDJ is a high-security facility.

No cameras or recording devices are permitted inside the premises, a policy similarly enforced during the visit of the Maguindanao massacre case as the nearby Quezon City jail annex.

Jihi Ingkiang, a kidnap suspect, said the yoga session relieved some of pain that he felt in various parts of his body during days when the weather turns humid.

"My jaw hurts as well as my arm because there are bullets still lodged in my body," he said, pointing to his right cheek. He did not say who shot him or why.

High spirits

After the session, the participating inmates seemed to be in high spirits as they chatted with other detainees.

But their good mood would immediately dissipate when they were asked when they were doing in jail.

"We hope Fr-bap [President Aquino] takes a look at our plight," said one inmate who declined to give his name.

"I've been here the past two years and up to now, I have not been arraigned or told which court would be trying my case," he said.

"To my government which is now in its laws, this should not be happening," he added.

Said Manibul, a kidnapping suspect, complained about the way the lawyers are handling his case. He said the case assigned to him looked inconclusive during court dates.

Asked about how he felt after the session, Manibul said the headache that had been bothering him earlier was gone, and even his cancer now stopped dropping cases.

Trinidad said he felt "full" after the yoga session even though he had been fasting all day. "My hunger disappeared," he said.

Sense of fulfillment

Trinidad said he felt a "sense of fulfillment" at having completed a session with the inmates at the high-or-curity jail. He said the detainees were profuse in their thanks for the laughter yoga exercises.

"I was told by one of the inmates (that he felt like a person after being) accorded respect," he said. The inmate explained that people tended to have a wrong perception of detained individuals.

Manibul said: "this is what we need" to restore the time-in-detention.

"In this place, it's as if we're buried alive," he said.

TGIF: No homework

From page A1

dessert by the thought of doing homework," said Education Secretary Armin Luistro in his memo.

The order was addressed to Department of Education regional directors, schools division and city superintendents and heads of public elementary schools nationwide. The memo covers more than 12.3 million students attending some 37,500 public elementary schools across the country.

Stating the amount of effort that goes into making assignments, Luistro's memo said teachers should give a "reasonable" amount of work to be done at home "to give their pupils ample time to rest and relax at home for the rest of the day."

No more quality time

"Common homework assignments may include a period of reading to be done and writing to be completed, problems to be solved and projects to be worked on, among others. The purpose of which is for pupils to increase their knowledge and improve their abilities and skills," Luistro said.

"However, it has been observed that parents complain [that pupils] have too much homework assignments, which rob them and their children of quality time to be together in more enjoyable activities," the memo added.

But the Teachers' Dignity Coalition (TDC) said doing weekend homework will only create more work for parents and their children to spend quality time together.

"In reality, making assignments is a way for parents and their children to bond," said TDC spokesperson Emma Policarpio.

She said teachers would know how much work to give students for the weekend and said assignments would only be "making the self-learning, self-discipline and time management" skills ever without the supervision of teachers.

"The DepEd has good intentions for the memo ... But teachers know what kind of assignments to give students ... those that they can do on their own. Homework is not related at to human emotions," Policarpio said.

CHR to help 'nameless and faceless' rights victims

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NEW chair of the Commission on Human Rights intends to give attention not just to high-profile cases but also to those "nameless and faceless" victims that have no political or cause-oriented organizations backing them up.

Chair Loretta Rosales, speaking in a recent meeting of the Senate human rights committee, said the CHR would be devoting equal time to lesser-known cases of torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and other human rights violations.

Examples, she said, were the poor and nameless ones who were tortured in a police station in Tondo, and construction gravedigger killed by the so-called Davao death squads.

Cases backed by political groups—for example, that of the 43 health workers arrested in Morong early this year—usually gain more prominence, Rosales noted.

"Though you get the situation where you also have nameless, faceless victims of enforced disappearances, torture and killings" that are easily forgotten because there are no political organizations following up their cases, she added.

Cruel acts

She noted that the Tondo case would not have gotten anyone's attention had the video not been leaked to the media.

She also said cases involving state police and military agents tend to get a lot of attention, but there are also instances where non-state agents are behind cruel acts.

One example is an employer's inhumane treatment of hired help. Another involves the humiliation taking place in school organizations.

High-profile cases are still among the CHR's priorities, including that of the "Morong 43," a group of health workers arrested on suspicions of being communist rebels.

Rosales also said she intends to strengthen the commission's monitoring system so there is more in safety for violations persons. She allows the CHR to see for itself whether or not human rights are being respected and protected in certain places.

Recognition, award for 2 blood donors

IT'S NOT EASY to get a Gallonor award from the Philippine Red Cross (PRC).

As the award name indicates, one must have donated a total of one gallon of blood. This is a challenge, considering that the maximum amount allowed per extraction is 450 cc, and that a minimum of eight weeks is required between extractions.

But at Smart Communications Inc., two employees have qualified for the award after consistently participating in blood donation activities conducted as part of the telco's partnership with PRC.

Ian L. Tecson Jr. and Raul Nuñez are part of the reason Smart has earned a "Bloodhero Haka" recognition from PRC.

"I have been donating blood since 2005, all through Smart-sponsored activities," says Nuñez, a senior network supervisor at the IT Department.

Twice yearly the PRC establishes a day-long voluntary blood donation activity in a "chair" set up at Smart's head office in Makati City.

Rare blood type

A partner of the PRC since 1998, Smart has long been advocating voluntary blood donation among its employees as well as members of its school and community partners in an effort to help ensure adequate blood supply nationwide.

Nuñez, who has the rare AB blood type, was first encouraged during one of his annual physical exams to donate blood for deposit in the blood bank.

For Tecson, who heads the Customer Services Application department under the IT Group, the idea of donating blood was first presented by his doctor, who told him about its health benefits.

Unlike women, men don't have a monthly period that naturally cleanses the body. Men will be a lot healthier if they regularly donate blood because the body will then be forced to replenish the blood supply, he was told.

While donating blood can benefit the donors themselves, the unmatched fulfillment comes from knowing that one is able to help others.

"There was a time when I lost my donor's membership card to a cramphysician whose aunt needed blood," Nuñez said.

Screening rules

The PRC-issued donor's membership card is used to record each information as the date of the blood donation and the amount collected. It is color-coded based on the donor's blood type.

Anyone who presents a donor's card to the PRC is considered a priority and is served if a supply of blood. And the card may be borrowed and used by people other than the actual donor.

Blood donors must be of good health, having the flu or a cold, and low iron and platelet count are grounds for disqualification.

They should not have taken alcohol 24 hours before the blood donation, or had body piercing or tattoo for the past year.

Aileen Cerveza, Contributor

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Gun attacks won't stop peace summit

COTABATO CITY—Police are putting in place tighter security for a peace summit set tomorrow here following the fatal shooting of one of the summit's leaders.

The summit was aimed at finding ways to end decades of bloodshed that has become the norm in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) as a result of clan wars, politics and unsolicited criminality.

While the city was not part of the ARMM, organizers chose it as the neutral venue because the ARMM keeps a regional government compound here.

Senior Supt. Willie Dangoc, city police director, said police and the military have established a security cordon to ensure the safety and security of the summit participants, including several foreign dignitaries.

The peace summit is the first to be held in the conflict-wracked and impoverished autonomous region.

Four days before the summit starts, a lone gunman shot dead Datu Amir Ebrahim, commissioner for Magpeitenase of the ARMM Regional Reconciliation and Reunification Council.

A suspect identified as Casres Bansad, 26, of Barangay Rosary Heights 3, was taken into custody by policemen.

Dangoc said Ebrahim was having dinner at Arabel Carendero on Gimaan Avenue when the suspect, armed with a .45-cal. pistol, shot him without provocation on Thursday.

"His death came as a surprise to all of us because he was working for peace in Maguindanao," said Supyb Sinsuhdo, ARMM executive secretary.

He said Ebrahim was involved in the settling of several family feuds in the past.

"He was very active in pushing for peaceful settlement of all conflicts in Maguindanao and we are sad at his violent death," Sinsuhdo said.

Police said an investigation was being conducted.

Also on Thursday, an unidentified gunman shot dead Bailyn Wak, 34, administrative officer of the Cotabato City Treasurer's Office.

Three others were wounded in the attack.

Dangoc said soldiers and policemen will be deployed to strategic areas to provide security to the summit.

Sinsuhdo said the city was ready to host the summit and security measures have been put in place. *Charlie Lesome and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Mayor breaks silence on rape, says politics behind charges

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Zamboanga mayor who is facing trafficking and child abuse cases for allegedly raping a 12-year-old girl in his son's house on Sept. 12 has broken his silence, saying the allegations were false and politically motivated.

In a Sept. 16 letter e-mailed to the Inquirer on Saturday by an anonymous source, San Francisco Mayor Jose Rodriguez said the case filed by the girl and her mother at the city prosecutor's office here on Sept. 14 "is a dastardly program of character assassination with the end view of causing political turmoil in the locality."

The source said the letter was passed on Rodriguez's account in the social networking site Facebook. Lawyer Val Rodriguez, the mayor's son, told the Inquirer by telephone that his father's letter was authentic.

'Ill repute'

Mayor Rodriguez called the girl and her mother, who used him for violation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208) and Anti-Child Abuse Act (RA 7610), as "an ill repute mother and daughter duo."

Aside, the pimp who took the girl to Rodriguez's son house in San Marcelino on the night of Sept. 12, is also facing a complaint for violations of RA 9208. In a sworn statement before Camilla Bueno, Olongapo City assistant prosecutor, the girl said Aida promised that she would be paid P5,000.

Rodriguez, 61, said the statements of the girl and her mother in the charge sheets "are nothing but a concoction of falsehood shrouded in inconsistencies."

Vindication?

He said his counter-affidavit would be submitted by his lawyer to the prosecutor's office. "Soon enough, the wheels of justice will take its due course and I bear faith truth will prevail and I shall be vindicated," Rodriguez said.

A San Marcelino official, who asked not to be named for fear of being dragged into the controversy, told the Inquirer that Rodriguez was being massive and looking for scapegoats by painting as his political enemies as responsible for his predicament.

Senior Supt. Rafael Santiago, Zambales police director, referred Senior Insp. Francis Bagaoisan, chief of the San Marcelino police, and Senior Police Officer 1 Orlando Samsaging, chief investigator, pending the resignation of their conduct and supposed inaction on the rape case involving Rodriguez.

The girl's mother said the mayor's statements were "shocking" and "unbelievable."

"He is really shameless. He's been caught in the act and he still has the gall to blame that he's been set up. What does he mean that we are [people] of ill repute? He's the one who is shameless," she told the Inquirer.

"My daughter has been traumatized by this and I don't even know if she can return to school. I can only hope that [she] can still lead normal lives after this, and put this behind us," she added. *Robert Gonsago, Inquirer Central Luzon*

ENTREPRENEUR
The entrepreneurial spirit of the Filipino could be found outside congested Metro Manila. On a highway in Nueva Ecija, a woman tends to a stall selling kitchen utensils made of native materials and other products that she hopes to sell to tourists. *(AP/MARIO)*

Experts: Youth key to fight vs gambling

BAGUIO CITY—School administrators and teachers in the city suggested a link between online gaming and habitual gambling among students during a government-led workshop on illegal gambling on Tuesday.

Vladimir Cayabas, administrator of the National Institutes of Information Technology (NIIT), said local universities and colleges have gathered data showing students being hollow-eyed by excessive betting websites.

Cayabas said the city's 468,000 college students, most of whom coming from other provinces, are exposed to online games.

But schools like NIIT observed a shift in interests among students, from mainly competing in virtual combat games to betting in online poker games, he said.

Cutting access to online gaming websites in schools, as well as banning endorsement to regulate access to popular online gaming sites, were among the academe's recommendations to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) here, following views that portray illegal gambling as either a singular police problem or a religious concern.

Cayabas said teaching the negative impact of gambling in elementary and high school classrooms could help condition the minds of young Filipinos against gambling.

> 'Teaching the negative impact of gambling in elementary and high school classrooms could help condition the minds of young Filipinos against gambling.'

Cayabas said volunteers believed that removing a future market would eventually curb gambling.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan said recent discussions on illegal gambling reported the "confusion and chaos" of previous administrations, where the specter of "fanning" and payoffs also threatened law enforcement.

Like in previous debates, the illegal numbers game (sweng) again made the headlines because of supposed pay-off being offered by Aquino administration, he said.

Archbishop Emeritus Oscar Cruz said top government officials, including two who are close to President Aquino, have received gambling pay-offs.

"Let the DILG establish evidence first," said Domogan. *Nikko Catiwan, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Court orders customs exec's arrest amid feud with firm

DAVAO CITY—A court ordered the arrest of the customs collector at the Sasa Wharf here for refusing to allow a port service firm to resume operations after it discovered a shipment of smuggled rice that the collector allegedly ignored and let in.

Judge George Omelio, of the Regional Trial Court Branch here, asked in his order Sept. 17 "any officer of the law" to arrest Customs collector Atty. Nelson Castigador.

Judge Omelio said Castigador has been ignoring court orders, which were upheld by the Supreme Court, to allow Aquarius Container Yard (ACY) to continue operating at the Sasa Wharf.

ACY, owned by businessman Rodolfo Reta, is a customs examination that inspects incoming cargo to verify if items being brought in through the wharf have been declared properly.

The 4th Intramuros Cantigador and ACY started in February when Reta's company discovered that one of the 40 containers that ACY was examining contained smuggled rice.

ACY reported the discovery to Castigador but the customs official ignored it and, instead, allegedly ordered the release of the cargo.

Castigador also ordered ACY to stop operating after the discovery of the smuggled rice.

Reta sought the help of the courts to prevent Castigador from shutting down his business.

He also sued the customs official in the Ombudsman.

In subsequent court decisions, Castigador was ordered to restore ACY's services but he questioned it.

The Supreme Court sustained the decision allowing ACY to operate at the Sasa Wharf.

Judge Omelio said Castigador should be imprisoned for defying the court orders. *Judy Quiros, Inquirer Mindanao*

Lack of rangers exposes Benguet forests to fires

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Environment officials said the lack of forest rangers has hampered their efforts to curb forest fires in the province but local officials believed that the problem was due to the national government's failure to make forest fire protection a priority.

Benguet board members on Monday were surprised over a report of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) showing that the agency could only have 24 forest guards to protect the province's 24 watersheds.

The board also criticized the DENR's annual budget which allocates only a minimal amount, if not zero fund, for fire protection.

Guillermo Fianza, provincial environment and natural resources officer, said Ampucao (dark-red bean farming), intensified forest burning and widening of pasture lands have caused 165 forest fires in Benguet from 2003 until this year.

He said there exist 590,591 seedlings (growing trees which measure below 11 centimeters in diameter), 1.71 million saplings (growing trees which measure 11 to 20 cm in diameter) and 406.4-cubic meters of fallen trees gnawn in 7,999 hectares of forest lands.

"We are afraid we could lose more forests and the prolonged dry season due to climate change has made our task [extremely] difficult," Fianza said.

But provincial board members doubted the accuracy of the DENR's report, saying last summer alone, several fires were reported or seen in many of the province's 13 towns, particularly in Bokod, Kabayan and Itogon-Suyoc.

Lawyer Juan Kimayes Jr., a member of the board's committee on environment, said the national government should put in more funds into the DENR's annual budget for fire protection.

He said the listing of forest guards should also be exempted from the government's rationalization policy that freezes hiring.

"[Why would] the national government cater such an important outlay for a very crucial position in the bid to protect our remaining forests?" he asked.

THE MOUNTAINS of Benguet have been vulnerable to poaching and forest fires not only because of the encroachment of lowland people but also because of a lack of guards to protect the province's forest areas.

He said the hiring of forest guards should also be exempted from the government's rationalization policy that freezes hiring.

"[Why would] the national government cater such an important outlay for a very crucial position in the bid to protect our remaining forests?" he asked.

The board members also sought a review of the presence of land tenure systems in the province's watersheds which limited the jurisdiction of the DENR over forests covered by such tenure.

DENR talkmast said the tenure referred to areas covered by Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADT), like those in Atok and Bakun areas.

Another is Executive Order No. 224, which placed immediately within the premises of hydroelectric power plants under the care of the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Fianza said these laws and documents transferred to the local government, in case of CADTs, and to the Napocor, in case of power plants, the responsibility of managing the forests.

"What is left for the DENR to guard are the nontenured areas," he said. *Delmar Cariaso, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

INQUIRER Mindanao

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John Jan Bandayrel
Acting Chief Nina R. Alcantara

Floods? Try Maguindanao's unsinkable box

By Edwin G. Fernandez
Cotabato City

WILL it rain or shine? Whichever way the day's weather goes, it makes sense to be prepared for the unpredictable flash floods, according to a group of environmentalists in Cotabato City.

And disastrous typhoons, like "Frank" (2008) and "Ondoy" (2009) did call for some Filipino innovation and, indeed, prompted the introduction of a multipurpose unsinkable box (MUB).

Journalist Nash B. Mindanao has designed the first MUB model for a local network of environmentalists called the Bulik Kalilintad Advocacy Group (BKAG). The group is engaged in a broad-based pro-environment campaign, including massive tree planting and support to rural communities, its president, Zenron Cinco, said.

On Aug. 31, Mindanao showed in a riverside community in Barangay Rosario Heights how the MUB floats, carrying up to 15 people, based on principles of mathematics and physics, and an actual buoyancy testing. In high waters, it can rescue more people by clinging onto a modifiable rope around it, he said.

The MUB is 6 feet wide, 8 feet long and 16 inches thick, and is built in bolted woods and clamped cables, bronze marine nails and thick plywood. Research are cylindrical vessels that constitute a covered raft, each measuring 8 ft long and 9 ft wide, with a diameter and 9.3 inches in minor diameter.

In all, materials and labor cost a total P 27,000.

Mindanao, along with assistants Khalid Alimudin and Khaled Langcadeg, demonstrated how the MUB can also be converted into a sofa cum office divider furniture for belongings, or turned into a bed for village-based beachboys when idle.

CHILDREN remove their shoes and slippers to walk barefoot in flood, a scene common in many low-lying areas in the country during heavy rains. Countless of proposals have been made to prevent flooding but none has worked. EDWIN G. FERNANDEZ

'With a number of sea disasters occurring in recent years, maybe it's about time also to change the old maritime tradition that places life rafts and lifeboats only on specific ship decks'

Disaster councils

Brig. Gen. Dionisio Sendaydiego, chief of the Army's 602nd Brigade and ISAG vice president, said his unit was inclined to endorse the MUB, through the chain of offices and commands, to the Northern Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), in support of multipronged efforts for a "disaster-risk and casualty reduction program (DRCRP)."

"Local disaster councils find this [MUB-DRP] difficult to realize even with enhanced disaster awareness and preparedness training, principally because of the high cost of the conventional rescue rubber boat," said Mindanao, who is also an honorary correspondent for Maguindanao and Cotabato City.

Assistant and Governor Sahal Ibrang, another ISAG officer, said they were waiting for the return of Maguindanao Gov. Esmael Mangudadatu from a fellowship trip in Kuwait to coordinate collaborations on the local DRCRP utilizing the pole-pushed MUB.

Dr. Hadja Evelin Shayrina Gonzales Lantan, veteran director for General Mindanao, said the west also endorsing the MUB model as a timely Filipino innovation in wave of global climate change.

In an MUB background, Mindanao wrote that he looked forward to developing another model run by a small motor engine or one propelled by a fabricated mechanism of pedals, chain and gears.

Maritime tradition

He claimed no "total originality" of his multipurpose raft. He pointed to the Book of Genesis, Chapter 6:9 of the Christian Bible, and Chapter 11, Verses 27-31 of the Muslims' Koran, as the source of the "age-old concept of floating vessel, already known to the time of Noah...And even the law of buoyancy established in Archimedes' Principle conducive many events in the time Nebuchadnezzar."

"With a number of sea disasters occurring in recent years, maybe it's about time also to change the old maritime tradition that places life rafts and lifeboats only on specific ship decks. Designing removable and floating beds-as-boxed on open decks can do better in reducing risks and casualties," he said.

Mindanao said the MUB can also be useful to government and private campaigns against corruption by holding documents and computer sets afloat in case of flood areas to keep them off floodwaters.

"Who would have thought that Antonio Bonifacio [in Quezon City] could be under arrowhead of floodwaters in distressly the blink of an eye?" he asked, referring to the flash floods triggered by Ondoy last year.

Boeing said the BKAG has also propagated over a million seedlings of the indigenous mi'pehi tree, in partnership with Mirror Industries and the local academe. About 500,000 seedlings have been planted or distributed to allied organizations in Upi, Maramag and Barira-comers in Maguindanao.

During the last six months, pupils in two school buildings that the group donated have taken part in disaster awareness planning, along with residents, volunteer teachers and soldiers in their areas.

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UNSOLVED POLITICAL KILLINGS

AFP ready to cooperate in any probe

By Dona Pazzibugat

THE ARMED Forces said it was ready to cooperate in any investigation on political killings during the previous administration as it received "with an open mind" a study that pointed to security forces as main culprits.

A recent study made by lawyer Al Parreñas and funded by the Asia Foundation said the United States Agency for International Development, based that nearly half of the 305 cases of extrajudicial killings under the Arroyo administration from 2000 to 2010 remain unsolved since the suspected fairer had been identified.

But of the 142 cases where suspects have been charged either before the prosecutors' office or the courts, 19 percent were military personnel, followed by communist rebels at 12 percent and by the police at 9 percent. The rest or 3 percent of the suspects were either public officers, elected officials or militiamen (CafGu).

The study also found that most of the extrajudicial killings occurred in Mindanao, home province of former President now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Western Samar and Negros Occidental. Most of the killings occurred between 2005 and 2006.

Only in four cases were the suspects convicted, for a dismal 1 per cent conviction rate.

"We look at [the report] with an open mind so we can use this to better our human rights efforts," military spokesman Brig. Gen. Jose Mabanta Jr. said when asked for comment.

He said they can use the data presented in the study as basis for some purposes as the Armed Forces reforms its ways under the Aquino administration.

Malacañang insisted that the military does not sanction the summary killings of activists.

"But we can say as this point that we will open our resources for whatever inquiries and investigations that will be conducted specifically by CHR [Commission on Human Rights]," he said.

AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Ricardo Isreal Jr., who President Benigno Aquino III appointed last July, has made human rights advocacy a major thrust under his term.

The AFP is set to hold a first ever human rights summit before the end of the year. It is also finalizing a human rights handbook for its soldiers.

The military meanwhile continued to quibble on the use of the term "extrajudicial killings" which removes involvement of state forces.

"We just want to reiterate that the so-called extrajudicial killing is a term coined by the more radical groups of society," Malacañang said.

"We believe instead (the term used) should be local criminal terms such as killings, kidnapping or murder instead of extrajudicial killings. Certainly it is never sanctioned by the state much more the Armed Forces of the Philippines," he said.

No soldier has been convicted for extrajudicial killing, according to the study.

SC, Palace execs set budget meet

COURT ADMINISTRATOR Midas Marquez said that a meeting between him and Palace officials had been set for this week to thrash out the issue on the judiciary's 2011 budget proposal, adding that the meeting supposed planned talks between President Aquino and Chief Justice Renato Corona on the matter.

Last week, the Supreme Court issued an unprecedented statement warning that the Aquino administration was "courting chaos" in reducing its proposed P27.1 billion budget by P1.1 which Malacañang cut down to P17 billion.

Marquez, meanwhile Supreme Court spokesperson, said reporters that he would be meeting with Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa and Budget Secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad.

"I only had to re-open again for the review of the budget in the judiciary," Marquez said in an interview last Friday.

Heated arguments

Marquez said that heated arguments always erupted during budget season but this time, the dispute over the increase in the salaries of justices and judges that led to an alleged threat of a mass leave by magistrates had been blown out of proportion.

He defended his "strong" statement last week, saying that he merely wanted to "present a clear picture of the [state] of the judiciary."

"I was just asking (how questions), it wasn't a warning. We were raising legitimate concerns," Marquez said. With a Nam

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, September 19, 2010
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Am 8:4-7

Hear this, you who trample on the needy, to do away with the weak of the land. You who say, "When will the new moon be over that we may sell our grain? Let us lessen the measure and raise the price, let us cheat and tamper with the scales, and even buy the poor for money and the needy for a pair of sandals."

Yahweh, the pride of Jacob, has sworn by himself, "I shall never forget their deeds."

2nd Reading: 1 Tim 2:1-8

First of all I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for rulers of states and all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and undisturbed life in godliness and respect. This is good and pleases God, for he wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth. As there is one God, there is one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave his life for the redemption of all. This is the testimony, given to its proper time, and of this, God has made me apostle and herald (I am not lying, I am telling the truth) for made me teacher of the nations in guiding faith and truth.

I want the men in every place to lift pure hands in prayer (chosen without anger and discussion).

Gospel: LK 16:1-13 (or Lk 16:10-13)

Jesus said his disciples, "There was a rich man whose steward was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned the steward and asked him: 'What is this I hear about you? Draw up an account of your administration for you cannot be steward any longer.'

"The steward thought to himself: What am I to do now? My master will surely dismiss me. I am not strong enough to do hard work, and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I will do. I must make sure that when I am dismissed, there will be some people to welcome me into their house.'

"So he called his master's debtors one by one. He asked the first who came, 'How much do you owe my master?' The reply was: 'A hundred jars of oil.' The steward said: 'Here is your bill. Sit down quickly and write down fifty.' To the second he put the same question: 'How much do you owe?' The answer was: 'A hundred measures of wheat.' Then he said: 'Take your bill and write eighty.'

"The master commended the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the people of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light. And so I tell you: Use filthy money to make friends for yourselves, so that when it fails, those people may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever can be trusted in little things can also be trusted in great ones, whoever is dishonest in slight matters will also be dishonest in greater ones. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling filthy money, who could entrust you with true wealth? And if you have not been trustworthy with things which are not really yours, who will give you the wealth which is your own?

"No servant can serve two masters. Either he hates one like the one and is fond of the other, or he regards one highly and the other with contempt. You cannot give yourself both to God and to Money."

Commentary:

"Sir, in a complete account of your business of my property."

We are not here for a purpose—to make this world better, to bring love and mercy, healing and compassion.

We will be asked to account for when and how we did these things.

Quotes: "Stewardship: Parables," No. 3 (Homilies by Fr. Jeff Cooke, Editorial, Quezon City, 1991); this volume, Scott Quinn City, 1st Ed. 2010, 80); Parables, Today... (CD 470-0703) and Life in the Parables Today... (CD 470-0703) and Life in the Parables Today... (CD 470-0703) and Life in the Parables

US couple pleads guilty to abusing RP workers

MIAMI (Florida)—A Florida couple pleaded guilty to conspiring to hold 19 Filipino employees against their will working in sweltering state and hotels, the United States justice department said on Friday.

Sophia Mamuel, 41, and Alfonso Baldonado Jr., 45, were owners of a labor contracting service based in the Florida city of Boca Raton.

Mamuel and Baldonado "conspired to obtain a cheap, compliant and readily available labor pool, by making false promises to entice the victims to leave Africa," read a Department of Justice statement, quoting court documents.

The conspirators promised the workers high wages and visa to three years at nearly work in the United States, then had the workers pay "substantial recruitment fees, including their airfare," which put them in debt to their US-based employers, according to an indictment earlier this year.

Once the workers were in the US, the defendants "compelled the victims' labor and services through threats to have the workers arrested and deported, knowing the workers faced serious economic harm and possible incarceration for nonpayment of debts in the Philippines," the statement read.

Prior to the workers arrived in Manuel and Baldonado's Florida residence, the couple confiscated their passports and "housed them in overcrowded, substandard conditions without adequate food or drinking water; put them to work in area country clubs and hotels for little or no pay; required them to remain in the defendants' service, unpaid (above three-year installment work."

They ordered them not to leave the premises without permission and "threatened to have the workers arrested and deported for complaining about these terms and conditions," the statement said.

Mamuel also pleaded guilty to lying in an application filed with the US labor department to obtain foreign labor certifications and visas under the federal H2B guest worker program.

"These defendants victimized vulnerable individuals for profit," said Thomas Perez, assistant attorney general for the Civil Rights Division.

Agencies involved in investigating the case include Immigration and Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, the FBI and the US Department of Labor. AFP

Veteran cook dismissed over text message wins case vs employer

By Nikko Dizon

A long-time cook who claimed he had been illegally dismissed two years ago recently won his case after the Court of Appeals ruled that a text message could not be construed as a form of resignation.

"The text message is not sufficient to justify the conclusion that the petitioner rendered his resignation," the Special 14th Division of the appellate court said in a nine-page decision penned by Associate Justice Francisca Acosta.

The petitioner, Romeo Gumtodoc Jr., had been working as a cook at the Sterling Seahotels Co. since 1999 until his services were terminated by owners Michael Hilario and Alfonso Medina in June 7, 2008.

Gumtodoc filed an illegal dismissal complaint against the owners with the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) but lost the case. He then elevated it to the appellate court.

The restaurant owners claimed that on June 4, 2008, Gumtodoc sent Medina a text message that they considered his resignation, citing that he was facing dismissal for several infractions, including his alleged numerous absences and unhealthy work attitude.

According to court records, Gumtodoc's text read: "Sir ill get morning poh sa pamalye sa resignation nga matulid's problema kami magpawa pa? no. ito poh sa ilyonsaking aking desisyon sir salamat poh sa lahat sa tagal ng nagsilbi ako sir. Romeo Gumtodoc, Jr. God Bless. sana poh 2morgan po ang inyong sagot po para matimi po dyaong mailabas po."

In their comment to the petition before the appellate court, the respondents insisted that Gumtodoc's text message also included the line, "hindi ako nakadam sa inyo nang matgal..."

The court was not convinced.

"Such a statement, even with the alleged missing words supplied, conveys an equivocal message which could be interpreted in many ways. Suffice it to state that nothing in the text message conveyed petitioner's resignation. It was just a simple awkward adjustment of previous help extended to him and his family within the respondents' business," the court said.

The court added that the claimed resignation by Gumtodoc was "inconsistent" with the employer's filing of a complaint for illegal dismissal.

The court also pointed the respondents' argument that aside from the text message, the cook also asked for his separation pay amounting to P9,237.50 and an additional P5,000.

The court noted that the owners did not present evidence to prove their claim that the petitioner had asked for and received the separation pay.

As for the respondents' claim that Gumtodoc would have been dismissed from work for just cause, the court noted that the daily time record of Gumtodoc was neither certified nor signed by the cook, and was not proper by authenticated.

"In termination cases, it is incumbent upon the employer to prove either the termination or the validity of dismissal. Inasmuch as private respondents alleged petitioner's resignation as the cause of his separation from work, respondents had the burden to prove the same. The case of the employer must stand or fall on its own merits and not on the weakness of the employee's defense," the Court said.

The appellate court reversed the NLRC's decision in 2009 and ordered the owners to reinstate Gumtodoc to his former or equivalent position, without loss of seniority rights and other privileges.

If reinstatement was no longer possible, the court directed the respondents to compensate Gumtodoc with a separation pay equivalent to one month salary for every year of service as well as pay him full back wages inclusive of allowances and other benefits.

Gumtodoc started with a P3,500 monthly salary with the company and was receiving P5,000 monthly at the time of his termination. —

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Guilt trip

IN A country where the dockets groan with more cases than the courts can handle and the prisons are overcrowded with innocent men, the Supreme Court's swift affirmation of the guilty verdict for the acquitted Abadilla 5 would appear to be a triumph of justice. After all, Col. Rolando Abadilla was killed in 1996 and the five were found guilty in 1998. Though the convictions may still appeal the verdict, there

EDITORIAL are already rumblings that the decision, which ends a 14-year wait for everybody involved, may have been compromised from the start. All you need to do is peruse Justice Antonio Carpio's passionate dissenting opinion. There are always disagreements when the Supreme Court does anything, but it is the nature of Carpio's dissent that grabs one's attention.

Carpio certainly doesn't mince words: "The blatant and unacceptable transgression of the constitutional rights of the accused for the sake of delivering speedy, but false, justice to the aggrieved, can never be countenanced."

He goes on to identify six problems with the verdict that his brethren had confirmed entirely. It was there from the very beginning, he argues, and the whole chimera gets worse as it went along. Carpio points out the dangerously problematic testimony of the prosecution's single witness, Freddie Alejo.

Beyond the chicken-and-bad-egg nature of Alejo's identification of the five as the parties behind the Abadilla shooting, there were all sorts of hiccups regarding how the Five were arrested—there have been accusations of coaching the witness and torturing the suspects. All this, sneaks the consummate Alex Rieza-Jojo Brigade's claiming the hit on Abadilla as being theirs, leads to a disturbing disquiet.

We want all the cases to come to prompt closure in a reasonably speedy manner. We all want appeals studied and verdicts examined closely. It is true that justice delayed is justice denied for many of the Filipinos still in jail who have yet to be charged.

But the outrageous holes in the Abadilla case lead anyone to wonder what the 10 Supreme Court justices were thinking when they affirmed the Court of Appeals decision. There are always little gaps in many criminal cases, particularly those relying on a few eyewitnesses. It's not just that the Abadilla case has only one eyewitness; his testimony is riddled with more gaping questions rather than illuminating answers.

Why? It is because the entire Abadilla case hinges on one person's identification of the suspects. If Alejo is not telling the truth, all this is a terrible farce—except that five people are looking at spending the rest of their lives behind bars for something they didn't do. The case rests on a fundamental flaw, and yet the Abadilla case convicted and surprisingly much much through a justice system when characterized as sadly glacial. The Abadilla verdict was rained from the start.

It would be easy to just turn away, saying that this is just not case coming to very many. What makes this one so important? It's because this one is so obviously a judicial disasters, and all of us would be complicit in this patent injustice if we ignore it. After all, they could easily be you or me, or someone we care for, or are close to. Remember their names: Joel de Jesus, Lenido Lemaring, Romeres de Jesus, Cesar Fortuna and Augusto Santos. It is tempting to think of them as abstract concepts, as easy vessels for our national thirst for good governance and judicial excellence. But they are more than names; they are real people, with families and the right to a proper, as well as speedy, trial.

The four dissenting justices have good reasons to disagree with their colleagues—as do we. To repeat, the prosecution failed to discharge its burden of proof, specifically to prove the identity of the perpetrators of the crime beyond reasonable doubt," Carpio explains. "Accordingly, the presumption of innocence in favor of the accused prevails." This is the fundamental element our justice system scrubbed on. If it were you, wouldn't you want a fair trial? Listen to Carpio. In the inevitable rush to judgment, the innocent can easily be run over by the best intentions and the worst legislation.

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Faith and reason

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

The Pope seeks a dialogue between faith and reason that is mutually purifying and enriching

IT IS fascinating to read Pope Benedict XVI's speech the other day before members of the British parliament. The Pope spoke on "the proper place of religious belief within the public [political] process," drawing just visited Lebanon and Utila, two of the most important religious sites in Turkey, I could not have been more primed to appreciate the significance of this message.

The Pope sounded the alarm about what he called the growing "marginalization" of religion in public life. There are those, he said, who want to "silence" the voice of religion altogether. Turkey's Muslims could not have agreed with him more. Although the recent referendum on constitutional amendments in this country secular society dealt mainly with democracy and the nonexistent enumeration of civilian authority, the subtext of the debate within Turkish society is precisely what Benedict XVI is referring to in his Westminster speech.

He goes straight into the heart of the issue. "What are the requirements that governments must reasonably impose upon citizens, and indeed upon the consciences of citizens, if true diversity can avoid dilemmas be resolved?"

Benedict offers an interesting argument that standards of modernity can appreciate. He from defining a role for religion that intrudes into politics or in abuse politics, he needs a dialogue between faith and reason that is mutually purifying and enriching. There is a line that is found in all of this Pope's encyclicals.

While the Catholic tradition, he says, "insists that the objective norms governing right action are accessible to reason, proceeding from the premise of revelation ... the role of religion in political debate is not so much to supply these norms, as if they could not be known by non-believers—still less to propose concrete political solutions, which would lie altogether outside the competence of religion—but rather to help purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles."

This is an important statement. Religion does not aim to take the place of politics. Rather, it imagines itself as supplying the basis for ethical reflection in politics, and, for that matter, in all the other spheres of life ... the economy etc. This reflection is essential to preventing the kinds of distortions that we see in the modern world, Benedict says. "There is widespread agreement that the lack of a solid ethical foundation for economic activity has contributed to the grave difficulties now being experienced by millions of people throughout the world."

In his other writings, Benedict calls this reflective purification the work of conscience. In less modernistic terms, one might call it the distillation of wisdom from mere knowledge. I prefer the more learned word "reflection"—the ability to step back and observe the limited horizon of one's own self-referential standpoint.

Benedict argues that this reflection is basically ethical in character, and its tools are personally religious. Therefore, the observations of the week of reason in various spheres of life can only proceed from the perspective of faith. This view is equally strong in Islam, or perhaps even stronger than in any other religion. I encountered in secular Turkey a palpable resistance of faith, which could easily be mistaken for a resistance of religious fundamentalism. I have been struck by my interaction, in the course of this visit, with Turkish academics and scientists who take their faith seriously, and weave it into every aspect of their daily lives.

These highly trained professionals are as modern and as rigorously scientific in the practice of their disciplines as the most secular academics I have known. Had they been among his flock, they would have surely warmed the heart of Benedict. They seem to directly respond to his lament about "the increasing marginalization of religion, particularly of Christianity, in some circles in the western countries, even in nations which place a great emphasis on tolerance."

As a sociologist, I do not believe that all ethical reflection can proceed only from faith. But my brief encounter with Muslims in secular Turkey, mostly individuals who have been influenced by the ideas of beleaguer Gulen, has shown me how faith can indeed purify reason. (Still I think it is important to say that no single religion has a monopoly of ethics or morality. Reason must do its quiet work of purifying faith. I may not put it as sharply, but Christian Filipinos has a point when he wrote in a recent note: "The taming and domestication of religion is one of the unceasing theme of civilization."

* * *

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Accountability

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY is told about a clever painter who debated with some the paint he used for renovating a church. When he was doing the finishing touches, there was a sudden thunderstorm that washed away all the paint off the windows he had completed. Amidst the thunder and lightning came a booming voice from above: "Impaint! Impaint! And then no more!"

* * *

In today's Gospel (Lk. 16, 1-13) Jesus commends the dishonest steward for being wise in the ways of the world. However, the whole story ends with Jesus saying: "You cannot serve God and mammon," underlining the fact that there are more important things than worldly wisdom, and that there are more important matters than just money matters.

* * *

Money matters in this world. Definitely? But that is not to say that our whole world should be based, ruled, quantified, encompassed and defined by what we hold in our hands. It can wisely seem a thing that money can buy, as the song goes, "the rich would live, and the poor would die."

* * *

People laughed and savored my brother Manong Oscar when he stopped inviting donors for meals as governor of Pangasinan. People told him to return up, and warned him that his crusade will get him nowhere, materially and politically. Maybe they were right. But in time, in God's time, it will all add up to this one equation. It pays to be good, and crime does not pay. Plain old wisdom may claim, but it is pain and Oda conquered in being righteous, and doing what is right in God's eyes.

* * *

Don't sell out. This is the loud and clear message of our Lord in today's Gospel. It is so easy, in fact, so convenient just to pursue our worldly desires at all costs, even sacrificing our principles and our very souls in the process, but we should remember in the end what the Lord has told us: "What does it profit a man if he gains the world and in the end loses himself?"

* * *

Stewardship. We are all stewards. The truth is that we do not own anything. Even our life is lent to us. We are just administrators, not owners. So we don't own our possessions, we don't own our wealth, we don't own the world! We are all accountable to someone greater than us. The sooner we accept this, the sooner we realize that life is not so much a matter of getting but giving, not a matter of amassing, but sharing. Hello? "From dust you came to dust you will return," remember?

* * *

"Make hay while the sun shines." That seems to be the motto of our so-called public servants who make money while they are in position. However, please be reminded that this passage doesn't include making hay from other people's sweat and other people's lands.

* * *

"What are we in power for?" Again, this seems to be another favorite tag-line of many people in authority. The answer to that question is: "Service"! Plain and simple!

* * *

Last we forget, we are stewards of all creation. We must remember that we are all just passing by. There are people coming after us! Let us not leave behind a devastated, polluted and filthy Mother Earth.

* * *

I had a very edifying encounter with Ms. Marilou Mamaki, a Grade 1 teacher in Bauo East Central School last week. Many of our teachers live inspiring lives, but what makes her special is her strong sense of mission for her students. She is in charge of 30 indigent children in Grade 1, Section 4. They hardly have enough to eat and many cannot afford to buy school supplies. She herself is not rich, but in her own words, "as a second mother to these children, I try my best to help them in my own way." Now that's what I'd call a real steward, a true public servant!

* * *

Think about it: Money can be earned, but the love of a loved one is permanent, and the love of one's soul is irreversible.

* * *

At the end of our lives, we all will give a final accounting to God. May the money we have in our wallets be big as in our safe deposit, not in our conditional lies. Clean money shared with others will earn us our reward. Dirty money not shared will earn us our punishment.

* * *

When we come to the end of the day, when we come to the end of our lives, may we look back with a smile, and not be filled with regrets that we loved too little, too late. It's our call, our choice to live not only on earthly time, but also on eternal time. Live with you, fellow stewards, in this challenge and call, as we journey on.

* * *

Beatriz Matsuda invites you to a lay forum on "Understanding Alzheimer's: Facts and Myths" on Oct. 1, 2004, 9 a.m. to 12 nn at the Ateneo Hall, Christ the King Seminary. Dr. Deana Santos Elegor from St. Luke's Medical Center will talk on the causes, treatment and management, and care for dementia patients. For inquiries, please call 371-2252/ 9917/9156/7645.

* * *

A statement with the Lord:

Lord, remind me that I will have a final accounting with you at the end of my life. Amen.

Increase the judicial budget

I AM glad that President Aquino is open to the Supreme Court's proposal to increase the judiciary's budget. Indeed, he could kick off his campaign promise of judicial reforms with an increase in the judiciary's appropriation. At the very least, he could give the judiciary a proportionate share in the overall budget increases for the year 2011.

Fiscal autonomy. To assure its independence and integrity, the courts, says the Constitution,—"shall enjoy fiscal autonomy. Appropriations for the Judiciary may not be reduced by the legislature below the amount appropriated for the previous year and, after approval, the salary of magistrates—the Constitution adds—"shall be fixed by law. During their continuance in office, their salary shall not be decreased."

Note that the "fiscal autonomy" enshrined in the Constitution is not limited to the budget of the judicial budget and allowance of salaries. Unfortunately, it does not guarantee any salary increases, retirement benefits or other perks. Neither does it mention allowances and other compensation packages. Instead, it says that those items (salary increases, judicial allowances and other perks) is the annual discretion of Congress.

A long time ago, the legislature passed the Salary Standardization Law (SSL) to nationalize the compensation of all government personnel, including those in the judiciary, supposedly, for the sake of equality for equal work.

Enforcing the law, feeding the need to entice the best and the brightest legal minds to join the judiciary by increasing judicial compensation without irritating the ambitious who labor under the SSL, the Congress in the Proper and Uniform Classification Law), President Ferdinand Marcos—exercising his martial law powers—issued Presidential Decree (PD) 1949.

This law created the "Judiciary Development Fund" (JDF) to be "used for any purpose in its docket box of all courts. The chief justice was authorized to dispense "at least 80 percent" of the JDF to "augment the allowances of the members and personnel of the judiciary."

Averaging only about P1,500 per month, the JDF—which was banned as dockets fees are some 40 years ago, has become too miniscule in the context of present-day cost of living. So the judiciary-banned for more, in response, Congress enacted Republic Act 9227 authorizing a further increase in filing fees to be used for "Special Allowance for Judicial and Judges" (SAJJ). As of November 2006, JAJ effectively doubled the judicial salaries.

Recently, Congress approved RA 9946 that granted "additional retirement, survivorship and other benefits to members of the judiciary." In the meantime, judges from supposedly "privileged" courts (Court of Tax Appeals, Sandiganbayan) for their former ones that would seem to ridiculous, coupled with a lifetime pension not only for themselves but also for their spouses whom they may predecease. However, the increase in dockets fees and the savings from unspent allocations had been insufficient to fund the mandated retirement benefits.

Unless compensation is rationalized, it would be difficult to fill up the 400 judicial court vacancies with competent and honest judges, given that at least 10 years of practice is required for appointment to regional trial courts. After 10 years of practice, bright lawyers already receive from big law firms about P150,000 monthly plus bonuses, allowances, transportation, housing and other perks. To attract them to the judiciary and to keep them honest and productive, their salary is given compatible—not to say equal—pay and benefits.

Indeed, it would be pointless to talk of speedy, up-to-date justice (which I wrote about last Sunday) in this space and other judicial reforms without tackling the most basic of all reforms—the luring of judges imbued with "proven competence, integrity, probity and independence."

Inadequacy of present sources. The judicial allowances and other benefits provided inspite two sources: the JDF, the JAJ and savings from budget allocations. However, the monies earmarking them clearly anticipated the inadequacy of these sources. For instance, RA 9946 states that "(t)he amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's savings of the Judiciary. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act." Once all the judicial vacancies are filled up as part of the effort to hasten the dispensation of speedy justice, there would be no more savings to speak about.

Year, there are other public services (education, health, social welfare) that cry for more money. But what the Supreme Court is asking for is not "more money" but money that is supposedly provided in law. As a result, it could even forcefully order the government to fulfill these legally enforceable commitments by means of deficiencies or resolutions, as has been done by the highest courts of other countries like Canada.

As Chief Justice Corona Lobo underlined the request of Budget Secretary Butch Abad and some lawmakers for an accounting of the JDF, JAJ and other outside sources, is they could intelligently calculate the definite time need to be funded in the budget.

Finally, I hope the judges will erase their media hype of a "judicial crush" or "mass hoax." Such provocations could precipitate many and unnecessary misbehaviors with Congress similar to what happened in 2003 when some solons attempted to impeach the then chief justice.

* * *

Comments are welcome at sbelleza@gmail.com, lun@hotmail.com

Loving Pinoys

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

He wears sentimental at times, as when he writes of makeshift basketball courts he encounters in remote mountain barrios: "entire hoops built from bolted irons, from which the nets all the way to the supports ... some nets sported handwoven nets made out of abaca fibers," and through his game was far from perfect as these grey-tipped hoops and earth floors, "shining them (the players) with a spiritual purity I ever experienced in a church. The devotion it must have taken to build an entire court from scratch touched me. It was one of the most sincere expressions of love I'd ever had eyes on."

But what's his encounter's a "five-week" quality basketball court in his home barangay amid demonstration of squatters, Bartholomew is sharp in his critique, confessing that "I hadn't been around long enough to know if the crowding on such basketball courts was symptom or cause of the problems facing the Philippines' notoriously corrupt and irresponsible government. But the upside-down priorities were plain to see. You can't drink fiberglass backboards. And you can't eat them, even in extremis. Instead of sacrifices, instead of drinking the people got basketball."

* * *

START HERE following the Manila Seen on the road at a championship, itself an inspiring tale, Bartholomew takes side trips to other parts of the island, discovering in the process other aspects of Filipino society and personality.

In Cebu, he stumbles by a tournament with the unusually name of "Sandugo Hoop Showdown" (which he translates into a "Midget's bone throwdown") where a team of midgets is matched against a team of cross-dressers. The game he watches as part of a local fiesta is instructive to Bartholomew, not so much for the insights into the locals who can laugh without irony at the possibility of one kind sexually confused neighbor into "normal," by that token, he had lived in the Philippines for two years, but at that moment, he writes, "I never felt more American, or more outraged for that matter," he somehow, he reflects, "the performers didn't feel demeaned and fans enjoyed themselves with no malice intended."

In his story, Bartholomew takes on the role of a passionate player for school team battling it out for the title in a community tournament. But the tournament is clouded by the imminent arrest of the local team, and when the affiliating team is not to be less than fair, Bartholomew loses it, walking out of the court and pulling down his playing shorts for good measure. The crowd loved it. "Hours was spent in the aftermath of the game, as I scrambled in the face of flagrant consideration that these people valid. Not only was it great spectacle, but people could relate to it. For many Fil. pinos, it was the story of their lives."

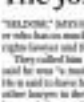
* * *

BOBBY GONZALES of Alaska's drive to the championship, Bartholomew would encounter many other instances of official malfeasance and crookedness.

But his writer's indignation but also outrageous about the shenanigans in the PBA. Even the way imports are measured to comply with varying height requirements. In the wink-and-nods attitude of team owners and managers toward game fixing, bribery, illegal betting, and player trading. While watching Alaska get fired in the wake of uneven refereeing, Bartholomew writes that "I realized that I got in bed accordingly sure for a foreigner in the Philippines ... that outrageous acts helplessness ... I had to choke down the phone of this rising in my chest and swallow my frustration."

Finally, Bartholomew understood what it's like to be Filipino and heir to a history of exile, of being forced to leave home and shore. And in sharing a love for basketball with Filipinos, Bartholomew fell in love with the people themselves.

The Joker



METHOD TO MADNESS

Patricia Evangelista

"DELIGNE," MTV's bio biography, "do we have a Filipino or who has as much ardor and commitment both as a human rights lawyer and freedom fighter."

They called him a thespian. They said he was fearless. They said he was "a man beholden to no one except his country." He is said to have handled more human rights cases than any other lawyer in the years between the declaration of martial law and the restoration of democracy in 1986. He supported the ramifications of the Marcos dictated 1973 Constitution. He condemned the abuses of military tribunals to try civilians. He stood for journalists, activists and statesmen, defending Ninoy Aquino and Jovito Salonga, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Jose Ma. Sison. He was incarcerated in stockades, general air rallies, injured, hospitalized and threatened with death. In 2001 he became the hero of a new generation, when he thundered that no cannot have a nation run by a thief.

Flat to labor Arroyo, now senator of the republic, who ran and won on the same ticket as Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a president who has been dogged from term to term on end to Ferdinand Marcos, and whose alleged thieving rivals that of Joseph Estrada.

On Sept. 14, in the words of this paper, "Senator-lawyer Jose Jesus Boncan champion Joker Arroyo took turns bestowing messages of bad news for allegedly tarnishing the country's image" and "for not being the best bet for the longer course." Right Hong Kong nationals were mesmerized during the incident inside a bus parked in the Quirino roundabout.

There were two issues at stake at the media briefings, although Arroyo attempts to make them one and the same. The first was the media's lapses during the hostage-crisis. On Aug. 23, arm-wielding ex-cop Rolando Mendoza took tourists hostage, making available information to the hostage-taker via a television inside the bus. MSO CIDS aired a blow-by-blow account of the situation, including assault positions, as well as live footage of the hostage-taker's brother being arrested. TV5 reporter Erwin Tulfo, with fellow Sanlyo Ida Kamonsuela communicated the hostage-taker via the hostage-taker's cellphone line in an excruciatingly tense 45-minute radio interview that ended with gunshots.

"We just wanted to talk to the hostage-negotiators first. We did not know that there were negotiations. We did not know that he would get angry. He sees throwers into a situation that is not under control," Arroyo said. And inside even as someone, I'm sure that the press facilitated negotiations itself, aggravating the situation for an already inept police force. There is a limit to press freedom, and even the lowest standard demands a respect for human life. Since the massacre, broadcast networks have committed to reform, GMA Network vice president for news operations Jessica Soho developed that there could have performed better, MSO CIDS News and Current Affairs head Khaka Bunag said during the hearing that they never expected that authorities would not be in control of the crisis situation, and said that failed was their failure as well. The conversation was clear: keeps leadership does not excuse journalism's irresponsibility.

"The local politics that damaged us," says Joker Arroyo during the investigation in aid of legislation.

This is the second issue at stake: bad PR. For Joker Arroyo, "What was taken during the hostage-crisis has damaged the Philippines immensely because of the broadcast networks, particularly in Hong Kong, it has damaged the Philippines."

It is a measure of the senator's political acumen that he fills in defense of the free press. His argument has nothing to do with live airing or blow by blow accounts or the appearance of men with microphones who believe their "calming effect on the hostage-taker" justifies interference. Even if local networks did not make the mistakes they made, even if all of them—from the biggest to the smallest—had done their professional endorsement would still be overwhelming 10 minutes after the fact. Reflection as the argument is—as if Hong Kong would not have heard of the massacre if CNN did not have the MSO CIDS footage.—Joker Arroyo has threatened to revoke franchises to any local airwaves, going so far as retaking, with the power of eminent domain, the property of a press article written by Hong commencing the Aquino government's handling of the situation.

"As far as I'm concerned," he says, "what was banned overseas from what was taken during the hostage crisis, has damaged the Philippines immensely and we have not recovered from it."

Joker Arroyo condemns the fact international networks were allowed to feed off local stations, thereby making public the staggering failure of the Philippine government. The franchise to use national airwaves has nothing to do with selling intellectual property already aired locally, any more than it does with Hong Kong Broadcasting Corporation being allowed to broadcast in Malaysia. There was no quibble from Joker Arroyo when the BBC picked up the Magnificent Seven, or when CNN aired footage of a family drowning under the San Mateo bridge as tropical storm "Ondoy" savaged Metro Manila. Neither did he complain when his walkout during the impeachment trial of Joseph Estrada was shown in full view of the international community, or when foreign correspondents published critical pieces in the New York Times during the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The need that is ensuring is censorship. To demand of the media to only show the country in "a good light," even overseas, is to do away with the very idea of a free press. It is to function where the good light dims in the face of greed and power. When Joker Arroyo realizes that videos can be uploaded online, that photos can be sent over Twitter, that there are live online feeds for overseas viewers, and that any 12-year-old with a laptop and a camera can put GMA's "24 Oras" and the World Cup will be shown in the same evening after all, following his logic, should be banned by what is true. He forgets that a nation whose Constitution demands no law should be passed abridging free speech is a nation that must accept that there are stories other than those of servants of Ricky Carandang and Sonny Coloma, and that those voices will not always follow the same rules.

"Everything is impossible, he's fond of," says Arroyo. "Impossible something unfavorable, then we're finished."

There is no reason for a government to be afraid when it has nothing to hide. Now the government is afraid, not of its people, as it should be, but of a world that is both outraged and astounded. It's taken the world to make this government afraid, then maybe it deserves the power it has over the people.

In the interest of full disclosure, the author produces and writes documentaries for ABC.

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An inconvenient truth about Opec

WORLD VIEW

A. F. Alhajji

DALLAS...THE three major organizations that become long-term oil demand and supply—the International Energy Agency (IEA), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), and the United States Energy Information Administration (EIA)—along with oil companies and consulting firms, believe that Opec will remain the predicted global demand and non-Opec supply. Their estimates are based on the assumption that Opec will supply the rest—without taking into account Opec behavior or considering that Opec members have incentives and the ability to meet the "residual" demand. For this reason, these models envision what is known as the "call on Opec," the difference between estimated world demand and estimated non-Opec supply.

The idea to model the "call on Opec" gained ground after the October oil embargo of 1973, a time when few economists were familiar with the oil market. The magnitude of the energy crisis of 1973-74 created a need for a model to predict oil prices. To diagnose the problem, they opened their oral kit and used what was available: if the supply and demand model did not work, then the monopoly model would.

Economists, politicians, and the media thus found the term "cartel" to be highly convenient. According to the monopoly model, the cartel would always supply the difference between demand and the output supplied by non-cartel members. Although the situation has changed dramatically since the early 1970s, and the cartel model has been proved wrong and harmful, it is still used today.

According to the models of world consumption—Opec will always produce the difference between world demand and non-Opec production. But Opec ran out of spare capacity between 2005 and 2008, and was not able to increase production as demand increased. Prices skyrocketed and exceeded all earlier forecasts.

It is nearly impossible for Opec members to produce the difference between estimated world demand and non-Opec supply. For example, in the recent forecast, the EIA base-case scenario is that, by 2035, Opec will add almost 11 million barrels of oil a day (mb/d) to its 2008 output. Is this possible when Opec production is declining at a rate of at least 1 percent?

Let's check the math: at a 1-percent rate of decline, Opec needs to add an additional 17 mb/d by 2035 just to maintain 2010 production. If the EIA forecast Opec production to increase by about 11 mb/d, Opec needs to add about 28 mb/d in the next 25 years, a feat that it has never accomplished...indeed, current production capacity is around 5 mb/d less than its peak.

The situation gets worse if non-Opec production declines below forecasts: oil prices must increase substantially in order to ensure demand and remain at such lower supply.

Five factors prevent the projected "call on Opec" from being met:

- a shift in investment from oil to natural gas in oil-producing countries;
- rising domestic oil consumption—and thus lower oil exports—by Opec countries;
- The number of oil-producing countries in the Middle East and North Africa that are becoming countries, which has led to their developing energy intensive industries that reduce oil and gas exports. Producing countries believe that if they narrow exports of its remaining reserves, they will be forced to leave their oil in the ground in order to sustain producers such as petrochemicals;
- Lack of "investment absorptive capacity" at high oil prices (the local economy's ability to absorb investments), which makes Opec members unwilling to produce more oil. If Opec nationals cannot invest the additional oil revenues, then they might prefer to keep oil in the ground;
- More importantly, demand for new production to compensate for 3 percent rates of decline in Opec's oil fields is so large that it cannot be met in less than 20-25 years;
- The inability to meet the expected "call on Opec" and the higher prices resulting from short-term oil supply disruptions encourage the increase of oil companies, independent producers and private-equity investors. It will also create an opportunity for other energy sources to fill the gap that Opec cannot meet (renewables, IEA 2009).

Indeed, given the expected growth in energy demand in the next two decades, and the problems—even likely—shortfall in Opec supply who love to the projected "call on Opec," the term "call on Opec energy" will lose its meaning. The only "alternative" to harnessing all feasible energy sources will be a slow growth world of perennial shortages and increasing misery.

Project Syndicate

Arna F. Alhajji is chief economist at AGP Energy Capital Management.

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to: jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

Libre Jason V. Sarmiento Jr.

MIND OF A HOSTAGE-TAKER (2)

'Just shot two tourists ... I'll kill them all'

(Editor's Note: This is the last part of the transcript of the interview with former Insp. Rolando Mendoza conducted by Michael Rogas from the station of Radio Mo Nasisiwasay (RMN) and by Kristin Taylor of News 5 on the scene at the height of the hostage crisis in Manila on Aug. 23. A botched hostage rescue by the police ended with the deaths of eight Hong Kong tourists and Mendoza.)

MEMBERS of a Manila police SWAT team surround a tourist bus in a botched hostage rescue. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MICHAEL ROGAS (RMN anchor): Sir, ... sir kausapin kayo ni Kristin ng News 5 sir, sandali lang po sir, sandali lang po sir, kausapin niyo lang po sir. Sir, sandali lang po sir, kausapin niyo lang po sir.

ROLANDO MENDOZA: (hostage-taker) Kikita kong nanonood yun. Gabing-gabi kasi eh.

ROGAS: Sino kausap ni Gerry Tello, Gerry or Capt. Rolando Mendoza sana kausapin niyo. Sir, pakiusap.

KRISTI TAYLOR: Capt. Rolando Mendoza, sir, kausapin niyo po si Gerry Tello at Senator Santiago para tapusin na ito. Sir, please. Please, sir, please. Sir, please. Sir, please.

FLASHBACK This was how the field looked when the leaguers first visited the Smokey Mountain diamond a year ago.

PLAYING BALL The kids of Smokey Mountain immediately put the newly-rehabilitated grass pitch to use.

Smokey's diamond in the rough rises

From page A1

leveling one of the peaks of garbage that form Smokey Mountain, to produce a makeshift softball/baseball field that was awarded hosting rights for a prestigious national tournament.

But the people behind the initiative had a bigger dream.

"Our dream is to turn this field into a regular playing venue for our kids," Manuel "Noynoy" Mamporte, project director of General Kalibasan Smokey Mountain, told the Inquirer a year ago.

Last Sept. 11, the dream turned into reality.

'Our second home'

Gone is the dusty field that was strewn muddy puddles in the rain. Gone are the bamboo poles and flimsy scoreboard that served as makeshift, backboards against home runs.

In their place is a grass pitch with steel poles surrounding the field. Chain net walls located higher, a scoreboard on one side, and five-step concrete bleachers for spectators.

Beside a muddy river, amid decades-old hills of garbage and stinks of blue and red container vans, the children of Smokey Mountain now have a playground of their own.

"The Smokey Mountain field is our second home," said Leonardo, a baseball player for Team Smokey which competes in a number of tournaments. "We really want to take care of this place."

Said 11-year-old Analie Antonio, a sixth grader and also a member of Team Smokey: "We now get to play and run around the field without slipping, even when it's raining. We're very happy [that we now have a field to play on]."

Antonio's friend, Ronie Rebot, also an 11-year old sixth grader, echoed Dia sentiments.

Not just a playground

The field was a project undertaken by Manila Jaycees (JCI Manila), which turned the finished product over to GK Smokey Mountain a week ago, with wide-eyed kids in attendance.

BATTING PRACTICE A member of Team Smokey, who trains everyday to rehab used to be a mountain of trash, shows off his batting skills.

Nonoy Mamporte recalled that while residents had voiced in their hopes for a spanking new field, it did not require a leap of faith for JCI Manila to buy into his dream.

"The first time I told the residents that we will rehabilitate the place, there were doubts, of course," he said, beaming. "But here it is, the Field of Dreams that we talked about before."

And the dream that has come true is but spawning even more dreams.

"It isn't just a playground. It's a place to help the kids achieve their dreams through playing sports," said Rowe Allen Tyangco, project chair of JCI Manila.

Sure enough, Smokey Mountain has seen its own sports program's boost, with events such as baseball, dodge ball and even beauty contests.

The GK-organized Smoke Cup, a football tournament for high school and elementary public schools in Tondo, will be held here this month.

The field is ready for use by Smokey Mountain residents who want to play or learn baseball, softball, or any other sport. Schoolchildren even troop to the place to watch their friends play.

It has become a popular—and safe—hangout for the youngsters, and for some fans, but, an extension of the four-concrete, two-window flats they call home.

Out of the dark alleys

"My son is here all the time. He comes here every day after class," said Evangeline Bote, 47, a resident of the nearby temporary housing area whose son also plays with Team Smokey.

"He gets home late at night, but it's okay with us just as long as he is here practicing," she said.

More importantly, the field has fleshed kids out of the dark alleys that can through the vestiges in a state of alcohol, drug addiction and petty crimes.

"It's a good thing we have this field because other kids here are really trained to play," Bote said.

Now, the kids are seriously practicing their sports, providing Manjares the welcome problems of refurbishing who gets to use the field on a given day.

He has come up with a solution that also encourages their schooling: Those who are supposed to be attending classes cannot use the field until they've done.

'I'm their coach'

Gary Bilgarijo, 32, the coach of Team Smokey elementary basketball squad, supervises a lot of these practice sessions. His claim-mates—Genesis, Donald and Gino—are team regulars.

"When they're in the field, I can supervise their actions. When they do something wrong, I tell them what they did," said Bilgarijo, who also played baseball in his day.

"My sons don't skip practice because I will find out. I'm their coach, and I will personally look for them," he added, laughing.

The training is serious, according to Leonardo.

"Sometimes our bodies hurt from practicing. We get really tired," he said. "But our opponents are really tough, so we have to train really hard."

Besides, the kids have found that the baseball can be life-saving.

Courtesy of the game he loves, Leonardo is seeing the world beyond the hardened trash fencing in the looming project where he lives, and has gone as far as Davi, Camarines Sur, in his second-hand cleats.

"We're happy even though we lose games because we get to go to places through playing baseball," he said.

Also through baseball, Bilgarijo's eldest son Genesis received a physical education scholarship at Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

"It's a big help to us because we really can't afford to send him to college," the father said.

Endless possibilities

To think it all started with the kids traveling to Rizal Park at first, just to be able to train, and mull making do with a makeshift field to hone their skills.

With a new field and a rejuvenated sports program, the possibilities are limitless.

"This is definitely a dream come true," Leonardo said. With a report from Francis Ed Elefan

'Dear Mr. President' letters seek free education

From page A1

the Philippines scribbled neatly-lined written and poems for the President to press for action on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), a list of eight global goals to eradicate poverty and improve the quality of life around the world.

Tagged the "Dear Mr. President" campaign, students in Grades 4 to 6 from some 2,000 public and private elementary schools around the country wrote to express the hopes of pushing for the Philippines' compliance with the MDG, especially the goal of achieving universal primary education.

The country is among nations known to be behind in implementing programs aimed at achieving the MDGs by the 2015 deadline. Specific to the education goal, the UN said some 5.2 million Filipinos are not able to go to school while 60 percent of children are not prepared to enter formal school.

The school letter-writing project is part of the "Stand Up, Take Action" campaign that calls for swifter and more decisive state and civil society action on the MDGs ahead of this month's United Nations Summit in New York.

"We were amazed with the quality of responses from the students. The students are a variety of compositions, from letters to short stories, poems and essays. Most were familiar with the issues our country is facing," said Cindy Jorge of the Bato Balani Foundation, one of the organizers.

"The returns also showed the faith that they have in our President," she said.

In a brief program at the Department of Education's central office in Pasig City on Friday, selected students read out their letters to the President. Ms. Jorge Aquino, the lottery were handed to Education Secretary Armin Luistro.

"Through activities such as these, we are able to bring attention to the kind of quality education our students need. The failure of our country rests on our students and it is our responsibility not just the government, but all of us, to make sure that our students are able to have quality, accessible education," Jorge said.

Junior Steve Gaac, a third-grader from Iriga, Bikol, called on Aquino to revive hope in every Filipino.

"To my young mind, you are the one who can lead our country and make better things done," he wrote in a letter read in his behalf during Friday's rites.

"Please, Mr. President, help our country so we continue life's journey living hope in every Filipino's heart that in your government, goodness will start," Gaac wrote in his 10-line poem.

Besides letters, students from six provinces in different parts of the country also wrote messages on separate Goodnews walls, each a puzzle piece part of an "MDG 8" wall put together during Friday's program.

Most of the scribbles asked Aquino to address long-unresolved problems in the educational system, among them a shortage in school facilities and the lack of trained teachers.

Civil society organizations E-net Philippines, Kalusugan Kontra Kahirapan, Global Call to Action Against Poverty Tambuli, Bato Balani Foundation and the Dove Learning Systems put forward with DepEd and the UN Millennium Campaign for the activity.

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YOUNG VOLUNTEERS Philippine Daily Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez helps son Ben and Luisa with the finishing touches on a painting.

SHOW OF HANDS Volunteers from the Philippine Daily Inquirer pose for a picture after a day's work in Espeleta, Las Piñas.

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CONGRATULATIONS to the Shanghai Expo Jackpot first draw winners!

Maria Torres from Sampaloc, Manila & Jose Jaring from Botolan, Zambales.

Servathon: Volunteers touch lives, are heroes...

From page A1

Ong praised the participants for their "generosity of spirit ... Thank you for helping others who cannot help themselves," she said.

Instead of resting on their day-off, managers, supervisors, and employees of some of the country's leading companies joined Servathon.

Based on the premise that everyone can serve, BDO's mission is to mobilize people to address the critical social, educational and environmental needs of the Metro Manila area and in some provinces through volunteer action, according to its website.

For a day, volunteers, including the Inquirer's own 38-member team, joined in the coastal cleanup, planted trees, painted school classrooms and desks and landscaped school yards and urban gardens.

Accountants and doctors to children, lawyers offered free legal advice and doctors gave free medical consultations to marginalized residents.

Repainting desks

Inquirer employees refurbished and repainted old school desks at the Development Endeavors for Organized Sustainability Foundation Inc. (DEOS) in Tapong, Las Piñas.

DEOS, a non-governmental organization that promotes the welfare and causes of the needs of children and the youth, also serves as a preschool to some 80 children belonging to poor families in Las Piñas and Cavite, according to Brandy Galdez, the foundation's deputy executive director.

He said Tropical Storm "Ondoy" destroyed their old school desk that year.

"I'm sure the kids will be surprised and happy to see their desks with a fresh coat of paint on Monday," said Jaeymary Debes Santos, 16, a former DEOS student who joined the Inquirer team yesterday.

Volunteerism is alive

Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Inquirer president and CEO, said Servathon was a way to ignite and remind companies that corporate volunteerism is alive.

Romualdez and her two sons joined yesterday's desk-painting at DEOS.

"Volunteerism [nurtures the] heart," she said. "It is one way of reaching lives and reaching out to others."

Romualdez said that among the many advantages of corporate volunteerism was the opportunity to strengthen the bond among colleagues.

"It is likewise a team-building effort, an opportunity to interact beyond the usual office routine," she said.

Romualdez added, "When we come together, we are all equal, we are all just fellow volunteers. It's nice to be in a project where all of you are just giving yourselves and your time for a worthy cause."

In good company

Some of the 30 companies that participated in this year's Servathon were: Pacwest Tele Tronics, Mitsu Construction, BDO Corp., the United Dollar of Utopia Bank of Singapore, Banco de Oro Unibank, Bank of the Philippine Islands, General Assurance Don Pedro Inc. and Glico.

Also joining them were: Insular Life Assurance Bahamas Ltd., Insular Life Assurance, Globe Telecom, Stealth Solutions, HSBC, JP Morgan and Chase company, Kristy Bagos Fountain and Image Works, Krispy Kreme and Mia's Restaurant, Oriens and Co., Rosendo Hotels, Shantou Development Bank, Philippine Transmarine Carriers Inc., Rockwell Land, Rustans, Mitsuma, Starmercurry, Sayre and Delos Angeles law offices, San Beda College Alabang School of Law, SM Inspirational, Thomson Reuters and Tree Value.

The Senate was the only government agency that took part in the event.

The participants joined in the coastal cleanup, reforestation and renovation of schools and shelters, gardening, landscaping, tree planting, medical missions, free legal assistance, mural painting and school enhancement activities.

"ALL COUNTRIES are involved in human trafficking—either as a source of trafficked people, a transit point or destination."
—United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

GLOBAL Pinoy

Gilda Mónica Feria

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

An 'Aswang' in Athens

and other reflections from overseas director Anton Juan

INFORMATION FOR FOREIGNERS Multi-awarded director Anton Juan (left) is in town working on a semimalayan portrayal of social injustice adapted from Argentinian playwright Griselda Gambaro's work, "Información for Foreigners" (above). It will run at the UP College of Arts and Letters from Sept. 22 to 26 at 7 p.m.

OMEDAS in 1987, Filipino drama professor and director Anton Juan was as a television studio in Athens doing editing work on a film. On the monitor was a game show going on in another studio.

"The show's format was a quiz show where personalities were invited to give the definition of a word," recalls Anton, who was in Athens partly as a thesis-on scholar of the Greek Ministry of Culture, and partly to complete a French-funded documentary film. The show aired "Words of the Week?" asks contestants to discuss a certain definition.

"I heard the word 'love.' I stopped my work. The definition caught me. The TV host said: 'Oh, it's an ancient Turkish word which means one who takes care of the children, but nowadays we no longer use it because we now have 'Filipinas.'"

Anton, often referred to as the enfant terrible of Philippine theater, standing: "I went to the set and asked them to apologize for the racist use of the word, (which is) prohibited by international media law."

They did apologize, recalls Anton, who was named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettre by the Ministry of Culture in France and a received the Alexander Onassis Foundation International Prize for Playwriting in addition to his many Philippine awards for theater.

On being 'Filipinas'

But that was not the end of the issue. In 1999, then Press Secretary Joseph Estrada acted to protect the "exclusivity" of the word "Filipinas" in a Greek dictionary, which was said to mean "domestic or ancillary service helper." Estrada's own education secretary had apparently declared that "anyone who uses the words, that there was little the government could do "if that word achieved (the Greek's) eternal reality."

For Anton, who earned his PhD in theater in the study of epic and methods in communication) from the University of Athens, it has meant a continuing and deeper search for the meaning of "being Filipina" as an artist, as well as overseas.

The Greek wedding on at that time was in fact about migrant workers. Athens at that time had become a center in Asia, a hope for Filipina domestics and Filipino merchant seamen, who were shedding their traditional roles, even today to have Filipinas with college degrees who could be domestics—non-English-speaking maestros—on all-around house help, relates Anton.

There was no Philippine embassy at that time, just an honorary consulate, which was also a shipping company recruiting seamen, he adds.

'XXX' encounter

"After classes, I would frequent the house of Flora Medina, married to seaman Boy, who worked for one of Greece's richest shop owners. It was there where I met many migrant workers...housemaids and seamen and caregivers...their stories were the labor of my work."

He also met other Filipinos outside the Catholic Church in Athens. He can't forget this scene:

"I light a candle on the way from class. At the steps of the church is a Filipina. She asks me: 'Ano po? Ano po ang gawa niyo rito?' (And what about you ma'am, what do you do here?)"

"I am an, XXX. (Well, what else, XXX.)"

"XXX?" (Commonly understood in the Philippines as the symbols of the parasitic aswang society that went on to lead the Philippine revolution against Spain—human-eating, life-sucking-pating. Kumpanan ng mga hindi ng bayan sa XXX)

"Kasi bod Bulseta (scrubber of toilets)?" she retorts.

"And so history collapses there on the steps of the Catholic Church. I closely supported by the 15,000 Filipinos and Filipinas then in Athens, each one fighting tapey each has his—one for the father who passed away, one for the mother, the third for staying, one for the sister, young brother she needs to school, so that he does not do drugs; one for the husband, that he may not desire someone else while she is away. Imagine how much their church seems from tapey each Sunday.

"And here was one of them who had perhaps just finished lighting a gap of tapers, and who thought of herself, defined herself, in fact, with a parody of the heroic revolutionary movement excited, XXX." It was a burlesque, not merely a parody of oneself."

Cultural diplomacy

"But think of it," says Anton. "If there was that Filipina who could tell herself XXX—I also met a gay domestic who called himself CPR- 'Certified Public Asshat'—then how can our own stamped, self-esteem support our fight for equal rights and legality from the world community?"

One part of the response to the Filipinos controversy would be "cultural diplomacy," adds Anton.

"The Department of Foreign Affairs should truly reconsider a forgetting dance, from my self and many cultural attaches, for the establishment of a cultural office that would take charge of educating our diplomats in cultural heritage and history as portals of cross-cultural exchange."

But it would also mean, he adds, "reshaping our knowledge and respect for our heritage, history and culture, through education and institutionalized programs, that will redefine us and our core values.

"It is the corruptions of the government and greedy diaspora artists that have usurped the origin of our talents," he laments.

"Imagine, our nation has the oldest classical educational institution in Asia, the first university in the only country to win the double conjoin the Festival de Dijon, and Grand-prix in the World Music Competition, four awards in dance with Amorsolo, Guillermo Tolentino, Fernando Amorsolo, Rodin Rodin, Washington Bello and many others, has painters who have won laurels in Paris and New York, film makers who have won awards in Cannes and brought pride to our nation. Filipinos are among the best designers of furniture, final haircuts are limited (the best in advertising) and in theater, I venture, we have the experience of pain and the irony to emerge as the eye of the avant-garde."

In what is the unraveling of "being Filipino" abroad?

Our host is what he calls the "paradox of the migrant." The memoirs on overseas Filipino workers (OFW) forms. The of the transborder gave into the vicious cycle of the migrant's quest: the return home...or rather, the migrant brings home along with him or her. Like, a Pinoy will place sumptuous in a or—my mother does. And there's always the space on the table where all the food of the nation is laid." They also bring their own prejudices, regional stereotypes and class conceptions.

Filipino migrants bring the country's myths and superstitions along, as well.

The 'aswang' scare

Once in Athens, there was an "aswang scare." So lengthy "it spread around the Balkans and Caribbean and other groups in the Diyos community that a certain Mercy from Silan arrived in Athens and that her employer had a head attack where, suddenly decay in the middle of the night, he knocked on the door of the servant's quarters and found the upper half of Mercy's body ripped from the bottom and underneath the bed."

"So I hear the story in Flory's house on a Sunday. And all the girls are busy packing their things and getting ready to get back to their employers for night time comes and the aswang will be there.

"On the other side of the street, the seamen with their Black Labels and beers on the table, tease the aswang: Sabi nga sa'yo bosi siya, si Katya'y may 'yang aswang, eh ano'ng sa'yo bong Boheng ba?. (Tell her bosi that he can have the upper half, and we'll take the lower body.)"

Through the banter and laughter, Anton could see how a dipping apart of some fully dreams from face-to-face among many OFWs.

"All these stories have influenced my work in the theater. I no longer look just for meanings in their exotic traits or look at events with their intended meanings. I look for the meaning of events and objects as they evolve, turn, change in time. I look for meanings that impede..."

"I am not a migrant worker," states Anton. He is currently a full professor and theater director at the University of Notre Dame du Lac in the USA and in London. He has also done work on Filipino "Subaltern" or sex workers in Tokyo, and directed plays featuring the children of migrants of various nationalities in London.

On sabbatical from Notre Dame, he is back in Ateneo this year directing a play for the centennial of UP's Department of English and Comparative Literature, which comes first in one of its most outstanding alumni.

What the world has to face

He is currently directing a play based on "Information for Foreigners," by Latin American playwright Griselda Gambaro about the desaparecidos of Argentina, devising it so it mirrors the Philippine experience. It opens on Sept. 22, in time for the anniversary of the declaration of martial law in the country in 1972. The play raises many questions on social justice in a globalized world.

"I would like to remind our audiences that yes, there are issues we have to face, issues that have not been confronted with the passion and energy parallel to issues the rest of the world has to face, too."

"I want to talk to the world," says Anton, who asked what his overseas experience has influenced on how much.

"I want to represent the voices of the marginalized, voices that many foreigners and Filipinos alike have forgotten." MMVM

Fast-tracking of immigration petitions pose new challenges

ACCUSTOMED PAH able to travel to the United States to visit her ailing mother. She took care of her mother until the latter passed away. Agustina's only brother, an American citizen, filed an immigration petition on her behalf in 1995. In the meantime, Agustina fell out of status and overstayed a visitor to appear at a deportation hearing in October.

The good news is that new immigration policies have addressed the processing of the "family preference category" for Filipino nationals. Agustina will soon be told that the petition filed by her brother in 1995 was up for processing. Hence, she might be able to stay in the US if her immigrant visa is approved.

Agustina and her petitioner brother must meet all eligibility requirements for immigration—one of which is for her brother to show proof of his ability to support her.

The hard part is that her brother, affected by the recent financial crisis, has been unemployed for more than one year now.

Priority dates

Considering the severe backlog in petitions for relatives under various preference categories, the priority date becomes an important item. It will determine when the visa of the petitioned relative will be processed.

The priority date refers to the date the petition for the relative was filed by a US citizen or green card holder. It does not refer to the date of the approval of the petition.

Those priority dates are referred to in a table called the Visa Bulletin, which is published every month by the US Department of State. It may be accessed through the Department of State website.

For many years, processing of petitions for siblings and adult children of US citizens took at least two decades.

For spouses and minor children, petitions by green card holders usually took five or six years. In comparison, US citizen-petitioners were able to petition for their spouse and minor children within 12 to 15 months.

New policies

The US Department of State released a bulletin this month, which announced a huge leap in "second preference" petitions of green card holders for their spouses and minor children. From a priority date of January 2006 scheduled in the beginning of this year, the September bulletin shows that petitions with the priority date of January 2010 are now being processed for immigrant visas.

And even if the petitioner is a green card holder, not a US citizen, a petition to bring his or her spouse and minor children will be processed much faster.

For siblings of US citizens such as Agustina, the priority dates jumped from 1987 to 1994—a four year leap. Brothers and sisters of US citizens who were not expecting to have their visas processed so soon now find themselves having to attend to the requirements of their applications.

The population that is directly benefited by the rapid advance of priority dates is the elderly Filipino World War II veterans. From a 1991 priority date in this year's visa bulletin, the petitions for unmarried adult children with priority dates of January 1997 are now being processed. Unfortunately, many of these older petitioners have already passed away, resulting in the automatic revocation of their petitions.

Proof of ability to support

Petitioners in the US are hopeful that their dream of family reunification will soon become a reality.

But there are some unique challenges. Considering the economic crisis and the high unemployment rate, there are petitioners who are not able to appropriately execute affidavits of support.

Those who were laid off from their jobs cannot produce proof that they are able to support the relatives they have petitioned. Also, some have lost their homes in foreclosure.

The immigration laws therefore allow a co-sponsor to execute an Affidavit of Support in addition to the petitioner. Those who do not have a wide network of relatives or friends in the US, however, may find it difficult to get a co-sponsor. This situation is becoming an increasingly common occurrence for petitioners who are unemployed.

Many families are anxious to reunite. But now than the time has suddenly come, they find that reunification comes with grueling costs for those affected by the economic crisis.

IMFO
Lourdes Sandico Tancinco

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DACER-CORBITO MURDER CASE

Erap on US suit: What will they get from me?

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada yesterday frowned upon the $136-million civil suit filed against him, fugitive Sec. Perfecto Lacuna, and six other individuals in the United States by the daughters of slain publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer in connection with the latter's unsolved killing in 2000.

"Kakabuwisit ‘yan. Ano nanaman ba ito sa akin? Sasi ako babalik ng pera? (That's bullsh*t. What will they get from me? Where will I get the money?)" Estrada said with a laugh, referring to the suit in an interview with the Inquirer.

Estrada described as "nonsense" the accusation by the complainants that he "tormented" their father in a meeting in Malacañang on Nov. 21, 2000 before Dacer was killed.

"We had a very cordial and happy meeting on Nov. 21, 2000. We talked about the old days. Aano naman pa kung ako nakiusap kung si Bubby (Bubby was already my friend even when I was still in active service)," he stressed.

Estrada said he believed the complainants were just snubbed by their lawyers in the suit in a desperate attempt to link him to the double murder of Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito. Estrada has not been charged in the Dacer-Corbito case.

In their complaint filed with the US District Court for the Northern District of California in San Francisco, complainants Carina Dacer, Jacquee Dacer-Hewson and Kristy Dacer-Hungerford cited the defendants' violations of the Alien Torture Claims Act and the Torture Victim's Protection Act.

They are seeking jointly from the defendants compensatory damages amounting to $20 million and punitive damages worth $100 million.

Estrada recalled that it was Dacer who sought the help of former Cabinet Sec. Luis "Baby" Armilo to bring Angara—or "Sanpy" to Malacañang so the could meet her longlisted and wrestling godfather who was then President.

Armilo happens to be the uncle of Angara's husband whose mother is also a sister of the congressman, Estrada said.

He said that 30-minute meeting with Dacer, Angara and Armilo at the suite of the presidential residence were witnessed by many people, including the late Marilou Carlos-Reinoso.

"Ang sinasayan pa naming lahat, magkakumpare pa kami. I did not become him contrary to what they're saying (We were there very happy and we were all laughing)," he said. He added that Dacer even went back to see him before leaving the door to get permission for the arrest of then Pasay City Mayor Jose Marquez which the former president readily approved.

"Those who are saying I boosted Bubby Dacer were not even there. Iniipy nga dawn ‘yan dhe did not say anything. Ayaw even ang ako magsasalita? (It's only now that they're talking about it?)" he said.

"If I had boosted Dacer, el bobolitik ka (you an idiot ng mga pinoy na pare-pareho el Jose Marquez?) (Why would he even back to me to ask permission for Jose Marquez?) Why would he bring my goddaughter Angay if I would just license him?" he said.

Estrada said he had "bad news" for those who persuaded the Dacer daughters to file the civil suit against him.

"Isang bahay ito sa Greenhills nakasanla ni Meinbuds, pa‘t ibang artista ko nakasangla sa mga bangko. Ano pa kabuhaliw nila sa akin?" he said in jest, citing his incarceration for two and a half years for plunder, and downplayed his interest in the May 10 presidential election.

"I was inconvenienced and I had no income, then I lost in the elections. Ito ‘ano ang isang pera ako?" (You will think I have money?)" he said.

He said that Dacer, who was then chief of staff of the Presidential Security Group, was trusted by him and his family. "Kaya nga ako nagtataka, bakit ang Dacers ganito ang ginagawa sa akin? (That is why I am wondering why the Dacers are doing this to me?)" he said.

He said that Dacer, who was then chief of security at the presidential residence, was entrusted to his children and grandchildren.

"Hindi ko alam ang nangyayari. In fact, Dacer was part of my delegation during my state visit to Vietnam. He never had a quarrel," he stressed.

Kids of Inquirer's news vendors relearn Peñafrancia origins

NAGA CITY—As the city commemorates the 200-year devotion to the image of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, the Inquirer conducted on Thursday, Sept. 16, a three-hour session for around 220 children, majority of them kids of news vendors who distribute the Inquirer in the streets each day.

"It was the first time for the children of the news vendors to experience the Read-Along," said Ignatio Reyes, Inquirer circulations officer of the Sales and Marketing department.

He said there were around 140 children of the vendors who attended, with the rest composed of orphans under care of by the Missionary of the Poor and Missionary of Charity.

The children, who represented public schools in Naga City and Pili town, were introduced to the origins of Bicol's panoorong salled Ina.

Huddled at 205 City Naga's event venue, they surprised the storytellers with their facultativity with her story.

Viva la Virgen

It was like Sunday school for the kids who dunated from time to time the familiar praise "Viva la Virgen" upon one from storyteller Sir Steven, priest, book author, theater artist and religious instructor.

Keeping the young crowd focused on the story of Ina, that began in Spain in the 13th century up to its introduction to Cimahol de Nueva Caceres (old Naga City), storyteller Catherine Dominique Lagrimas, 20 El Niño Bendito, and Nueva, complemented each other's act through dramatics in English, Tagalog and Bicol of key events in the story.

Lagrimas executed in English the storybook "The First Embarkments in Devil" written by Fr. Wilmer Tria as Steven retold it in the native tongue and interacted with his young audience by asking questions from the story.

Throughout the exchange, the children gained up words like "expulsion" and "exorcism," and courage to know Fr. Miguel Sudden, the Spanish priest who brought the devotion to Ina in the Bicol region.

Signakers are devotees who make a commitment to participate in the processions of the image of Ina during its travelss from its Naga Basilica home to the Naga Metropolitan Cathedral and during the fluvial procession at the Naga River. Closed-eyes, on the other hand, refer to the early natives of Naga City.

When Nueva led the children in singing "Namayo Ta Nanay," the hymn to Ina, they sang their hearts out every if the song were in Spanish. "Bisanda ni devosa al Nuevo de amor... Que estuvo su pueblo con gozo amanecer... Patrona del Bicol gran Madre de Dios... Siempre la Reina de Nuestro Region... Patrona del Bicol gran Madre de Dios... Siempre la Reina de Nuestro Region."

NAGA READERS Dominique Lagrimas, Miss Bicolandia 2010, and Victor Dennis Nierva, Bicolano poet, lead the Inquirer Read-Along session held on Sept. 16 at SM Naga in Naga City. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Young generation

It is true said the book, which was written in a manner that speaks the language of children, aimed at the young generation who will continue the devotion in the long journeys to the next century.

"I hope that as early as their age, the spirit of being a vinyador will be inculcated in them," he added.

Fr. Andrew Bompieza, executive director of the committee in charge of the quincentenary celebration, said, "We also went to encourage the children to become educated and children on the importance of the devotion."

Sonia Bora, who represented the Bicol X-Ray library in the city said, "The most know how to read not only words but people and situations."

She added that reading is like "turning on the shoulder of giants" that allows one to see a wider perspective.

Bora is the widow of the former senator and reinvented Sheikam Rasul S. Bora.

Catechism

English teachers Jene Nabua of the Sixteenth Learning Center here, who also attended the activity said the read-along is a big help, especially for their "brothers" who teach catechism to the children.

"They will learn more of the Virgin and learn to pray to her," she said.

Beatriz Ortiz, mother of newspaper seller Alfredo, proudly enumerated the names of her four grandchildren and the neighborhood kids whom the brought along to the read-along.

"I want to give them the opportunity to know all about the Virgin through story-telling. I hope they would come to love her, too," said Ortiz.

Reyes observed how the children so avidly interacted with the storytellers and had fun during the activity. Juan Escandor Jr., Neal John Barrozo and Shiena Barrozada, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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EVERYDAY HEROES

Ateneo workers give time to build homes

By Roy Tristan B. Aguanta, contributor

IT WAS not easy inviting them to the interviews.

In the conference room of the Social Sciences building on the Ateneo de Manila campus in Quezon City, they fidget in the seats, clearly uncomfortable sitting in the seats they have so often carried and rearranged. Thirteen people are sitting down, 12 men and a lady.

They are all wearing the blue shirts and jeans of the Loyola Schools (Ateneo's various schools like the School of Social Sciences, School of Business, etc.) maintenance staff.

All rumored from years working under the sun, their arms smacked and their hands rough, these same hands are now less, some clenched, others rubbing together self-consciously.

They are not used to the attention. For nearly all of them, the idea of being interviewed was nebulous at best. They were being interviewed because they have been volunteers for Gawad Kalinga for quite some time now.

There 15 people are famous.

It would be so easy to extol their heroics, to talk about them as if they were extraordinary individuals, gifted with divine grace. But that would cheapen them and their efforts.

They are ordinary folks, but they are folks who have learned the peculiar joy that comes with volunteering. And in their stories, one finds a common thread—that of joy.

They were at the recruiter set in the middle of the room like it was about to explode. Finally, the doctors came out, exhausted, by at first. The questions were never answered by one person. Eventually, it became difficult to keep track of who answered what.

It was less of an interview and more talk and trading of stories. People would reply individually to the questions, or in chorus. In the end, the interview failed, not because no one answered, but because there were just too many stories, too many inputs given. An interview would be cumbersome and confusing, and it may just really the story that these people told. Instead of giving a transcript, we will tell their stories.

Nothing new

The Gawad Kalinga projects that they are being interviewed for are just part of the story.

For some of them, volunteering is nothing new—they have been volunteering in various capacities for some time. Richardo Gabira, for example, was already helping out when Ateneo began its formal disaster assistance efforts with the shelling of Mt. Pinatubo refugees in 1991. He smiles shyly as he recounts an instance when he had to sing to the refugees, just to keep their hopes up in the light of everything they had lost.

For others, their experience as volunteers began in Cabizo, Tierra Baja. It was a still unsafe by their supervisor, Jun Emanuels, to assist in the construction of a library.

It was, for many a new thing, many are having heard of Gawad Kalinga before. They were greeted by the members with their smiles. Alex Perez remembers his experience of having the only bathroom in a household of women and given a bed. Allied with visible beats even as the women slept on the floor.

The story is told with smiles, but this and the group's other experiences were evidently more than, as one sees the emotions flooding their eyes when they bring glasses of water while the women slept on the floor was a humbling experience.

The Cabizo episode, however, was more than that. It was also traumatic. The volunteers set out to work, only to be hold back by torrential rain.

The rain was enough to create the rumors or rays, making the act of placing blocks one on top of each other impossible. Cesar Tapet's knee was knocked on a metal spike.

Even then they struggled, at times simply standing still as they were battered by the wind and rain.

The volunteers told them to stop, but they stubbornly refused, concerned that the rainy day had already prepared would go to waste. It was only when they were reassured that the rainout would not be wasted that they relented.

No doors, no windows

They would realize later on, in the confusion brought by the storm, that they had built a house with no doors and windows, which they needed to protect once more.

The Cabizo project was completed in the time allotted, the volunteers refusing to sleep to get things done.

The project proved to be their baptism of fire. From there, they would move on to others as well, in Nueva Ecija, Hilongos, and Dagupan.

They would build houses and schools, often in a span of a few days. They would go back not just because they were doing good, but because the good they did made them feel good.

The songs of thanks from the children of the communities would infuse even the toughest men to tears.

Some of them nestled in close down in the telling, their eyes shining wet, obviously remembering songs and voices of thanks they still never forget.

Others remember being locked in an embrace by grateful elders, overwhelmed with gratitude. Their efforts brought them into contact not only with volunteers from around the country, but around the world.

They would have other experiences. When Tropical Storm "Ondoy" hit the country one year ago, they replied to the call once more, this time to clean up and lend assistance. Here, the people they helped were not as grateful and were, at times, openly hostile. Many often than not, it was simply a matter of proximity; there was no one else to get angry at.

The worst also brought out the worst in people, and the volunteers needed to be at their recovering end. Some of them were also victims of the storm, and were in the unique situation of being both helper and beneficiary.

Volunteering is not something that comes easy for them. The men have little to spare, whether in resources or in time. The weekends that they spend at the projects are weekends spent away from their families.

They are often asked by others why they do it, why sacrifice the time, why sacrifice their bodies and their energy for something that gives them nothing in return.

Their voices soften when they talk about this, some disappointed with their peers, others sad, wishing that their critics could experience what they experienced.

Their rewards cannot be brought home, and can be shared only with those who are willing to understand the unique joy in be-had from playing with grateful children in their new homes, or listening to a heartfelt song of thanks.

New kind of joy

Even in the recovery, their words fail. It is only Sulpayan Ilan Quel, that is said over and over by all of them. It is a different joy Grakuliary Sulpayan), that endeavors them when they volunteer, and it is something that cannot be explained adequately.

Most of these volunteers do not have homes themselves. And yet they build homes for others, to faraway places. Some return home from these projects not to a welcoming family,

ATENEO 4,5A

TWELVE men and a lady (standing from left): Cesar Tapet, Philip Balorio, Manny Avila and Ruben Panaan; seated from left: Bart Narciso, Roger Alabat, Eric Zamora, Wrenie Legada, Joselyn Bayuana, Alex Perez, Jun Granada, Richardo Gabira and Jessie Cordova

PART of the joy of giving, according to this hardworking Ateneo maintenance team, comes from listening to songs of thanks from grateful children who now live in new homes.

MANY of these volunteers have no homes of their own, but they did not think twice about helping put up houses for others, like the victims of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" that battered the country one year ago.

The greening of Marikina Watershed an ongoing project

By Rose M. Bueno, contributor

PHOTO: A denuded hectare in the Antipolo-Marikina boundary (the watershed is now a lovely patch of green, thanks to reforestation efforts launched by the Marikina Watershed Initiative. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

THERE is a denuded watershed to cover with lush forest cover.

It looked like a difficult task to undertake, but not entirely impossible.

A year ago, Tropical Storm "Ondoy" brought a month's amount of rainfall in just six hours, most of it finding its way past the Marikina Watershed and into the cities and towns of Marikina and Rizal and other parts of Metro Manila.

There were simply not enough trees in the watershed to absorb the deluge of waters.

But thanks to a collective effort, some 17,600 trees have been planted in the Antipolo portion of the watershed, particularly in Barangays Upper and San Isidro, as of May 31 this year.

This, after the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation (PDRF), a collaboration of private sectors that address the continuing emergency brought about by calamities, launched the Marikina Watershed Initiative (MWI) last June.

Reforestation scheme

The MWI aims to reforest at least 600 hectares of the 28,000-hectare watershed in 2010 or at least 3,520 hectares (equivalent to 5% percent additional forest cover) in the years to come.

Only 20 percent of the watershed's forest cover remained when the project began, caused by years of unchecked illegal activities, particularly slash-and-burn farming.

Studies revealed that the watershed needs 54 percent forest cover to help slow down a catastrophic run-off.

The PDRF decided to focus reforestation efforts in the watershed area of Antipolo City, since it takes up about 60 percent of the watershed and straddles three barangays.

A broad range of private companies, NGOs, religious organizations, municipalities, national government agencies and local government units formed the adhoc group for this reforestation effort.

Partners

The group included Manila Water, Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE), the Philippine Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation (PTFCF), Earthday Network Philippines, Mitsubishi for Life Foundation, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), National Power Corp., Fostering People's Education, Empowerment and Ecosystem (FPEE), Metalex, UCPB Foundation, Bagiu Sierra Madre Environmental Society, Smart, Harbor Foundation, Mga Anak ni Inang Daigdig, Kabalikat Marikina Watershed, Tree Foundation, the FLO Smart Foundation, Antipolo LGU, DENR, and the Diocese of Novaliches.

With the support of public and private partners, the PDRF is slowly making headway by setting up community-based seedling nurseries and planting trees in the area.

At the local network builds' and resource mobilizers of the PDRF, Smart communications Inc. (Smart) has not only mobilized employees and customers to participate in rehabilitation the 12 hectares adopted by the company, it is also persuading other big corporations to follow suit. The goal is to get members of the private sector to adopt 100 hectares of the watershed by the end of the year.

Among the first to respond to the call were Jollibee Foods Corp. and Accenture, which donated 35 million each. Trees planted in the area include native species like Palosapis, White Lauan, Bagtang, Banaba, Narra and Dungon. The MWI aims to plant 375,000 more trees by the end of the year.

Smart and other members of the PDRF Technical Working Group are currently leading efforts to identify additional tree planting areas in Antipolo and to find sustainable livelihood support sources to communities in the watershed engaged in charcoal production.

Working draft

Manila Water, on the other hand, with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the PDRF Technical Working Group and the Antipolo City government, have moved drafting a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

Early efforts involved around the 10,000 ha. identification of the Marikina Watershed by means of digital land mapping, to achieve faster and more efficient identification of available rehabilitation areas.

Ateneo workers give time to build homes

From page A-9

but one that questions their own loyalties, to families that do not understand the privation of a truly solidarity act.

They are still at it. They are still planning the next trip, saving up when they can in terms of energy and time.

Most plans to bring their families with them soon. It is the easy way to share the joy, the only way to make them understand why they do it and why they keep coming back.

They have gained friends who have visited them, and they are friends, with a shared experience that few can ever claim.

In the end, as they loosened up and laughed openly at their own stories, they showed themselves to be just like everyone else. It was supposed to be an immersion, instead, it was an amazing experience.

Thank you Raffaello Galeo, Eric Zamora, Jesse Cordova, Jo Bayoran, Ruben Yanson Jr., Alex Ibarra, Conan Tejad Jr., Philip Sabello, Alex Ramirez, Melanie Ortiz, Roger Mabul, Melanie Legada, and Jon Ganza, do of the Office of Administrative Services for sharing your stories.

This story and the accompanying photos first appeared at the website of the Loyola Schools of the Ateneo de Manila University. It is reprinted here with Ateneo's permission.

Abandoned shabu laboratory found in Quezon City

By Julie M. Aurelio

AN ABANDONED shabu laboratory containing tubes and other materials for the production of the illegal drug was discovered by police in Novaliches, Quezon City, Friday afternoon.

Chief Supt. Benjamin Mantele, of the Quezon City Police District, said the raid took place around 3 p.m. as a three-story warehouse in King's Point Subdivision, Bauangay Bagbag.

The police, along with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), conducted the operation armed with a search warrant issued by Judge Fernando Ilagan of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 78.

The occupants of the warehouse were no longer there when the raiding team arrived, Mantele said.

The police official said the warehouse had been used in the production of methamphetamine hydrochloride, better known as shabu.

No doubt

"There is no doubt that the operators was used in the manufacture of methamphetamine hydrochloride," he said in a text message to reporters.

The warehouse is owned by Cesar Vitro who had rented it to Wong Ka Ti, alias Eunice Wong, a Chinese national, for P70,000 a month.

Wong is believed to have left the building on Tuesday.

Vitro became suspicious of the activities going on at the building and decided to report it to police, Mantele said.

Vitro told police that the check paid by Wong had bounced and the tenant left an electric bill amounting to P30,000 when the regular electric bill was only pegged at P10,000.

Substantial number

Mantele said his operatives discovered a substantial number of large metal and plastic containers of various sizes many of which were filled with unknown liquid substances.

The containers are believed to be chemicals vital to shabu production.

The Quezon City police and the PDEA, however, are now determining its exact contents.

Police also found traces of shabu on a table in one of the rooms believed to have been used as a packaging area.

Truck loaded with television sets hijacked by 6 armed men

By Jeannette I. Andrade

SIX MEN carrying high-powered guns hijacked Friday morning a truck loaded with P600,000 worth of high-end television sets in Manila.

The suspected hijackers aboard a sports utility vehicle (SUV) blocked the path of an Isuzu 10-wheeler elsewhere closed van and then commandeered the truck.

Reports from the Manila Police District Anti-Carnapping and Hijacking (ANCAHE) unit, however, showed that Elmer Sotea, driver of the truck, reported the incident only yesterday.

Sotea said he was driving his truck along Espeña Boulevard in Sampaloc, at around 9 a.m. on Friday when a Toyota Fortuner without license plates cut him near the corner of P. Guevara.

The driver claimed that after he stopped, six men with long firearms alighted from their vehicle and ordered him off the truck.

Two suspects then boarded the truck, cradled the SUV and drove sped away, he added.

Sotea said the truck contained four LCD television sets and two LED television sets units, with an estimated value of P600,000.

Operatives of the MPD-ANCAHE are conducting follow-up operations for the identification and arrest of the hijackers as well as the possible recovery of the television sets.

Ikebana confab set Sept. 23-26 in Manila

DESPITE fears that the tragic hostage-taking episode of Aug. 23 would discourage foreign visitors to come to Manila, a key international conference and tourism event is set to push through at the opening of the Ikebana International convention Sept. 23-26 at the Mabuhay Heritage in Pasay.

Ikebana International said it does not expect any cancellations by foreign delegates to its four-day 13th Asian Regional Conference in Manila.

The huge gathering is the country's first major tourism event since President Aquino assumed office.

"We are praying for the victims of the horrible tragedy. Our hearts go out to the families who lost their loved ones," said Evangeline Cheng, president of Ikebana International's Manila Chapter 168 in a statement.

Cheng said participants, as well as guests from Hong Kong, are among the 200 foreign visitors slated to arrive for the conference.

"We also have confirmations of attendance by delegates and guests from Japan, India, Taiwan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, the United States, Germany and Italy," Cheng said.

She expressed hopes that the conference would help create better understanding, particularly between the Chinese Consulate of the former British Crown Colony and the Filipino people. Eight tourists from Hong Kong were killed in the highly-publicized incident.

Ikebana International is a nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to the promotion and appreciation of Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement.

Ikebana said it will use the conference as a step into Ikebana International's aim to unite peoples of the world through their love of nature and enjoyment of flowers, "literature" or "Ikebanature" is the conference theme.

The event includes flower arrangement exhibits, a grand demonstration, a banquet and a site tour.

Ikebana International's Manila Chapter 168 is conference host, with Cebu Chapter 145, Davao Chapter 153 and Cagayan de Oro Chapter 161 as co-hosts. Cebu Governor Lanete is conference chairperson.

US couple accused of passing nuke arms secrets

A PHYSICIST and his wife, who both once worked at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, were arrested on Friday and charged with a criminal conspiracy to help Venezuela build an atom bomb.

The arrests of Dr. Pedro Leonardo Mascheroni and Marjorie Roby Mascheroni and a 22-count indictment came after a sting operation by the federal Bureau of Investigation from 2008 to 2009. A raid on the couple's home in Los Alamos last December landed many secrets, computers and hundreds of files.

"If I were a real spy," Mascheroni told a reporter at the date, declining his interviewer, "I would have left the country a long time ago."

After their arrests on Friday, the couple appeared in federal court in Albuquerque, New Mexico, charged with handing over secret weapons information to an FBI agent posing as a Venezuelan spy. The government did not accuse the Venezuelan government, or anyone working for it, of seeking weapons secrets.

Venezuela has begun exploring for uranium, for its president, Hugo Chavez, has denied interest in developing nuclear arms.

The defendants, if convicted of all the charges, face potential life sentences in prison. Mascheroni worked for Los Alamos, the country's laboratory from 1979 to 1986, and his wife from 1981 until the raid on their home last year.

Mascheroni has been critical of the government's nuclear policies as misguided and has repeatedly accused federal agents of harassing him for his views.

"Leo is a gullible nut," said Hugh E. DeWitt, a California physicist, in a telephone interview on Friday. He knows Mascheroni and had testified before a grand jury. "He is a nut. But he has dug his own grave," DeWitt said.

LEO Mascheroni and wife Marjorie in 1998 photo

The indictment says that Mascheroni, 75, a naturalized citizen from Argentina, and his wife, 67, an American citizen, handed over weapons secrets in exchange for $30,000 in cash and the promise of nearly $500,000 in all.

"The conduct alleged in this indictment is serious and should serve as a warning to anyone who would consider compromising our nation's nuclear secrets for profit," David Kitz, the assistant attorney general for national security, said in a statement.

According to the indictment, Mascheroni told an undercover agent in March 2008, that he would help Venezuela develop a nuclear bomb within 10 years and that under his program, the country would test a secret, underground nuclear reactor to make plutonium, a type of bomb fuel.

In July of that year, the FBI agent provided Mascheroni with 12 questions supposedly from Venezuelan military and scientific personnel.

According to the charges, the physicist delivered to a post office box that November a computer disk holding a 333-page document, written in code, that contained "restricted data" related to nuclear weapons. AFP

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Afghan votes come cheap, and often in bulk

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN—How much does it cost to buy an Afghan vote?

Interim's parliamentary elections offer an opportunity to ascertain that price...and it is in theory a market with many buyers. As 2,500 candidates scramble for only 249 seats, Afghanistan may be a bonfire society in many ways, but it is very much capitalist bedrock (in the Stone Age sense, anyhow).

Nonetheless, prices are low. In northern Baghlan province, Afghan voters cost $15 each; in eastern Khanat province, a vote can be bought for $10. In Kandahar, voters sell their rights for as little as $1 a ballot. More commonly, the price seems to hover in the $5 to $6 range, as reported to New York Times reporters in places like Helmand and Khost provinces.

Even by the standards of a country used to one of the poorest in the world, Afghans seem to be selling their votes cheap, and it is not an surprising why.

Five dollars is a lot of money when more than half the population lives on less than a dollar a day. Indeed, in some rural parts of the country, there is nothing to buy. Many of a region's more rich economy. Businesses are often bread to the Ten Dollars a Day Taliban, recruitment laborers enlisted in cash-for-work projects like burying roadside bombs.

Vote buying is much more common in this election than the last national balloting here last year. The feeling, reports say, was that Karzai easily's election was under wholesale by suspicion of President Hamid Karzai, so there was little need for vote buying.

There may also have been less outright vote buying because it was more likely that Karzai would have won even without election fraud, as the incumbents and a member of the Pashtun ethnic group, the country's largest.

This time, many well-heeled Afghan independent candidates are looking to buy their way into the lucrative sinecures of a seat in parliament. That not only ensures with a healthy salary...about $2,200 a month) grants—but tremendous opportunities for graft.

And this time, a combination of voter apathy and disenchantment, far greater knowledge and a fairly small number of votes needed to win any individual seat have combined to, as an economist would put it, create a market. In many places, as few as 2,000 votes are enough to clinch the election.

Amil Osmani Shenwari, 68, a mullah, or village mayor, from the Spinghar district of Nangarhar province, says he knows one candidate in his area who has already purchased 14,000 voter registration cards.

"The candidates send their representatives to every village and district center to look for people who seem to sell their voting cards, and they pay 500 afghanis for each card," he said.

That's about $11 each.

In many places, so-called vote mafiahs organize the sales. There are brokers who collect all the voter registration cards in a community, and then peddle them to the highest bidder. Typically, the vote mafiah keeps half of the money and the voters get half.

"You should know that our leaders are big-belly people," said Shenwari, "and they care about themselves more than anyone else."

Of course not every Afghan vote is for sale, and Shenwari is one of those who disapprove of trafficking in votes.

"I am telling you if I find taken place during the parliamentary elections this time, the Taliban will definitely come back," he said.

Hajji Hazal Rahman, label, 45, a tribal leader in the Arche district of Ghazni, said, "I don't think people in Ghazni province will vote for people who try to pay for their votes. The person who sells his vote is the one who has no conscience."

Such scruples did not seem to bother one candidate from Ghazni City whom local elders accused of going door-to-door in villages offering voters $5 apiece for their registration cards. AFP

A BURQA-CLAD woman shows her ink-stained finger after casting her ballot

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Some US malls limit entry by young groups

NEW YORK—It is almost noon in Brooklyn, and school is just let out. Groups of teenagers crowd the sidewalks, looking for a place to socialize. But at the entrances to the Atlantic Terminal mall, there is no lounging, not at one popular meeting spot. Students are met by security guards, who block their path, ask questions and check IDs.

The guards are enforcing the mall's policy: Groups of four or more people under 21 years old and unaccompanied by a parent are not allowed to linger, lest they become a large rowdy group or even an impromptu gathering location as a flash mob.

"When kids gather in groups, they can get kind of rowdy. They can cause trouble," said Michael Hadfigal, a spokesperson for the mall's operator. "It's no secret. It happens, it's even the place."

Students said they had received a similar enforcement of the policy since the school year began.

Such a sweeping restriction is new. Mall operators are increasingly walking some locusts as "customer service policies" to rein in teenagers at specific times, usually on weekend nights. Of the 3,418 US malls, 66 now practice some form of constraining unsolicited visitors, up from 39 in 2007, said Jerry Sue of the International Council of Shopping Centers. AFP

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Cambodia jails monk for filming naked women

PHNOM PENH—A Cambodian Buddhist monk has been jailed after secretly filming hundreds of women as they bathed naked with holy water at a temple, a judge said on Saturday.

Net Hai, 27, was sentenced to one year in prison for producing and distributing pornography after allegations emerged that he taped more than 600 women pouring sacred water over themselves in a pagoda in Battambang.

Judge Hen Oeun said the former monk was handed the prison term on Friday over charges relating to a 23-year-old victim who approached police and said that people had been sharing video clips of the women on their mobile phones.

Another three women have since come forward to the court to file complaints.

The judge said the court also fined Net Hai two million riel ($500) and ordered him to pay compensation of $30,000 to the victim.

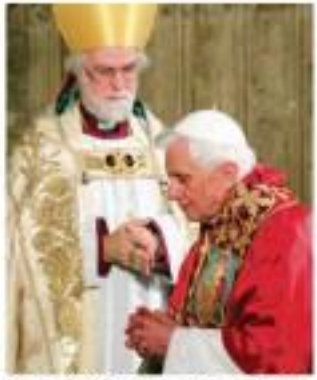
"He still faces similar charges brought against him from three other women," she said. AFP

Beauty

The WORLD

Editor Lamberto B. Gloco

6 suspected of planning attack linked to Pope's visit arrested in London



THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury Rowan Williams (left) and Pope Benedict XVI celebrating evening prayer at Westminster Abbey —

LONDON—As Pope Benedict XVI embarked on some of the most symbolic passages of his trip here, the British police arrested six street cleaners on Friday on terrorism charges released to his mass visit but gave no details of any threat against him.

The police and the Vatican said Benedict would not change his long-planned itinerary, on a day when he became the first pope to set foot on some of the most hallowed ground of the Anglican Church and British state and warned against the "marginalization" of Christianity.

News reports said the men, 26 to 50 years old, were Algerians awaiting for a conference who supplied 600 workers to Westminster City Council, which serves the area of central London with the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey where the Pope wound up his day on Friday. The first five were arrested, at 6 a.m. (1 a.m. Manila time), as a police van entered a depot two miles from Westminster. The sixth was arrested at headquarters.

While the Pope's plans did not change, security appeared to have been discreetly reinforced. As Benedict was driven through the streets of Westminster to the Houses of Parliament in his bullet-proof vehicle, a dozen security men surrounded it, and police officers stood shoulder to shoulder in a cordon between crowds of avid onlookers.

A police spokesperson said earlier in the day that officials were "satisfied that our current policing plan is appropriate" to ensure the Pope's safety and noted that Britain's broader terrorism threat level had not been raised.

Grim warning

In what appeared to have been a coincidence, Jonathan Evans, the chief of Britain's domestic security agency, MI5, issued a grim warning in a speech on Thursday that Britain continued to face "a serious risk of a lethal attack" by al-Qaeda-linked terrorists operating in the country.

The Pope was on the second day of a four-day visit taking place under the shadow of the sexual abuse crisis that has enveloped the Roman Catholic Church, and in the interest of the Vatican's historically troubled relationship with the Church of England, dating to the 16th century schism in which King Henry VIII broke with Rome.

On Friday evening, Benedict made the first visit by a pope to Westminster Abbey, the seat of the Church of England, where he and Rowan Williams, the archbishop of Canterbury and the spiritual head of the Anglican Communion, presided over an ecumenical service.

Tensions have been running high a year after the Vatican announced a fast-track conversion for groups of Anglicans unwelcome with their church's ordination of women and openly gay priests. Few Anglicans, though, have taken advantage of the new Catholic option.

Aimed at showing up common allies, the ecumenical service attracted several dissenters. The Pope shook hands with a female Anglican priest, the first to hold an important position in Westminster Abbey, and listened via headset to a prayer offered by her, and he listened while another woman offered a prayer that was livened to Dzongkha.

In July the Vatican issued new norms that make ordaining women in Catholic priests a grave crime against the faith, punishable by excommunication.

In Britain, Benedict has epitomized a strained theme of his papacy: warning against secularism in Europe. In the first speech by a pontiff in the seat of British government, at the 11th century Westminster Hall, Benedict argued for what he called "the legitimate role of religion in the public square," calling also for greater ethics in finance.

Symbolism

Before a packed audience of the country's political and civil leaders, including former Prime Minister Tony Blair, a convert to Catholicism, Benedict urged them "to seek ways of promoting an encouraging dialogue between faith and reason on every level of national life."

"I cannot but voice my concern at the increasing marginalization of religion, particularly of Christianity, that is taking place in some quarters, even in societies which places a great emphasis on tolerance," he added.

Afterward, the speaker of the House of Lords, Baroness Hayman, said that, in pluralistic Britain, Benedict's words on faith in the public square could also apply to Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Sikhs.

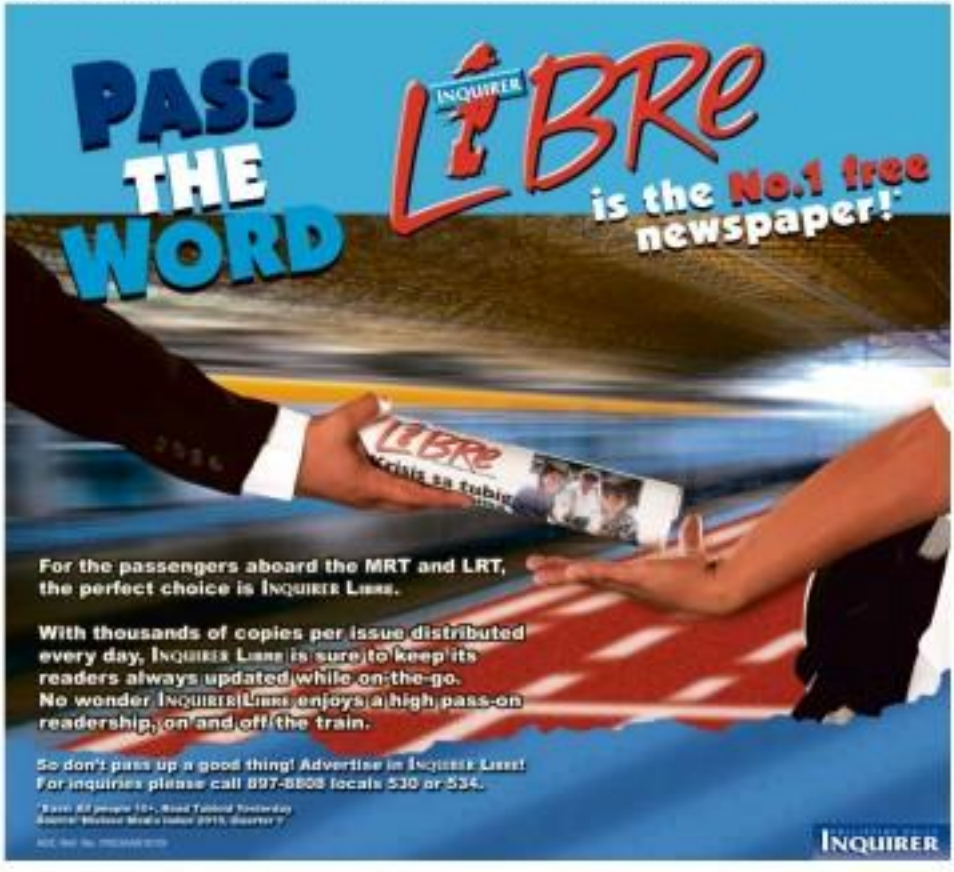
The visit was weighty with symbolism. Leaving Westminster Hall, Benedict and Williams paused at a plaque honoring Sir Thomas More, the Catholic philosopher and statesman executed by Henry VIII after a stalemate Westminster Hall for refusing to swear allegiance to the newly Protestant state over the Pope.

In his remarks on Friday, the Pope did not mention the sexual abuse crisis, but he is expected to meet privately with victims before he leaves Britain on Sunday.

On his flight here on Thursday, the Pope offered his most candid acknowledgment yet of the Church's failings in handling the scandal, saying church leaders had not been "sufficiently vigilant" or "sufficiently swift and decisive" in cracking down on sexual abusers.

In Scotland on Thursday, and again in London on Friday, groups of protesters mingled with crowds along Benedict's route, waving their jeers with the well-wishers' chorus of welcome.

Although the papal visit continued without disruption, the arrests of the six street cleaners ignited a jarring note into a day planned as a display of harmony and reconciliation. The police spokesperson said that counterterrorism officers raided offices in central London at 3:45 a.m. and that the men were being held "on suspicion of the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism." AFP



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Assistant Editor Francis Y.J. Ochoa

■ Lady Falcons eye V-League sweep /A26

Eagles seek finals vs Falcons

Ateneo tries to forge UAAP championship showdown with FEU

By Jaymin W. Pays

ATENEO HAS beaten Adamson in 27 straight games in the UAAP since 1997.

While the defending champion Blue Eagles were third last two games against the Falcons by a grand total of six points, Ateneo is determined to keep that streak going to a bid to end the last UAAP men's basketball championship battle today.

Game time is at 4 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum with the defending champion Eagles only needing to beat the Falcons once in this last Final Four series to avenge a tale that against the top-seeded for Eastern University Tamaraws.

The Tamaraws chained the Blue Eagles after contesting the fourth-ranked La Salle Green Archers, 69-59, to overcome to the first Final Four duel last Thursday.

Not a guarantee

"[The series] is best [because] is not always a guarantee that you're going to make it to the championship, but it's an easier road than being on the other side when you have to beat the other team twice," said Ateneo coach Norman Black.

"We're really had tough [eliminations] games against Adamson [this season], both games could have gone either way," added Black, who won Game 1 against Adamson at 80-66 then repeated the trick in Game 2 with a 55-51 decision.

Ateneo tries to make it a double victory as the Blue Eaglets got for their third straight finals yesterday against the University of Santo Tomas Tiger Cubs in Game 3 of the junior 91-year at 11 a.m.

Tickets for each game are sold separately.

Momentum

The Eagles secured the second twice-to-beat advantage after sweeping up the eliminations with a 10-4 record.

And it's a good incentive to have against the plucky Falcons, who posted their best eliminations record at 9-5 to advance to the Final Four only for the second time in 17 seasons.

"I think our team has the momentum," said Adamson coach Leo Austria. "I told my players that we just have to be consistent and we have to work on our end game."

Ateneo's veteran forward Nico Salva struggled for most of the season due to a broken finger, but chose to lock matches against Adamson with double-double performances to landmap Rich Long, Eric Salamat and Ryan Buenafe.

Organized team

"Ateneo is a very organized team," said Austria. "They're always prepared going into a game. But I think one motivation is we haven't won against them for more than 10 years."

Ateneo's 27-game winning streak against Adamson is currently the longest in the league's head-to-head matchups, just four games off the 31-game record La Salle holds over National University from 1998 to 2001.

The Falcons last won over the Eagles, 54-51, on Sept. 16, 1997.

In the junior battle, Kiefer Ravena hopes to lead the Blue Eaglets to their 17th overall title three days after being 32 points in the defending champions' 75-66. Game 2 triumph over the Tiger Cubs.

"This is going to be the hardest game for us, closing out the season," said coach Jamike Jarin, whose Eaglets only need to win twice in the series as an incentive for sweeping the 14-game eliminations.

Juniors MVP Kevin Ferrer tries to bounce back from a dismal nine-point output after drilling 33 markers in the Tiger Cubs' 77-71 triumph in the opener.

The Blue Eagles are on their record-tying 13th straight Final Four appearances, matching the feat set by La Salle Green from 1994 to 2005.

If the Blue Eagles were making the back-to-back championships will face the Tamaraws in the Finals for the first time since 2003 when FEU swept Ateneo in 2-0.

But an Adamson victory will forge a winner-take-all for the last title slot on Tuesday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Good start

"I always remind our players that we should have a good start," said Austria.

The best-of-three Finals will start on Sept. 21 also at the Big Dome.

If Ateneo closes out the juniors title series, the Blue Eaglets will record their first three-peat since winning four straight crowns from 1981 to 1984.

"We expect UST to come out strong and prepared," said Jarin. "We limited Ferrer's points, but some Zamboanga's going to be fresh and ready, so we also have to be ready for him."

The Tiger Cubs, whose last crown came in 2000, must win two straight to bag the title.

IF PAST matches are any indication, appears the Ateneo-Adamson Final Four tussle to be close and bruising.

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deaths due to DENGUE

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2 six-footers as sparmates for Pacquiao

By Butch Quiambao

TWO SIX-FOOTERS who can punch will provide Manny Pacquiao the tough sparring he needs in his buildup for his Nov. 13 showdown with Mexican Antonio Margarito at the Dallas Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

Conditioning expert Alex Ariza said yesterday that Cleverbel Pro sensation Michael Medina, a light middleweight nicknamed "Murder Man" and undefeated Simon "Highlander" Marcelenus will be joining the list of sparring partners when Pacquiao opens his training camp in Baguio this week.

"Two guys who can punch for sure" was how Ariza described the two fighters, who were tapped in approximate the height and reach of Margarito which Pacquiao will have to solve in their showdown for the current WBC super welterweight title.

Medina has a record of 24 wins against two losses and two draws with 19 knockouts while Marcelenus is 20-0 with 17 knockouts.

He said trainer Freddie Roach tool Medina to prepare Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. for his fight against Sebastian Zbik in Oct. 15 and he passed to the scanner.

"He's very good. He comes forward, throws lots of punches. He is a strong kid with great conditioning," Ariza added.

Pacquiao's other sparring partners are welterweights Rashad Holloway and undefeated Chris Tapia (7-0, 5 KOs), who are scheduled to arrive this morning with Roach.

He said Holloway and Tapia may be used by Roach to prepare Pacquiao for the possibility of "trying to bait" against Margarito, who has a five-inch height advantage and a similar advantage in reach over the Filipino.

Meanwhile, Dequiano Advincula's Michael Kenzo said Pacquiao would leave for Baguio "either Wednesday after the congressional session or for sure on Thursday morning."

He added that while Pacquiao liked working out at the Johnny Rhodes gym in Quezon City because it was spacious and cool, there were also inclement that bothered the foreigner congressman.

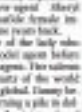
HAPPY? Pacquiao waves to his fans at the Dallas Cowboys Stadium during his recent promotional tour for his coming May 12 fight against Antonio Margarito.

Female import agent impresses

FRANKLY, I WASN'T too impressed when player agent Jimmy Espiritu introduced his fellow agent Sheryl Reyes, "the first female female import agent" to the entire team back.

Jimmy was in awe of the lady who was a commercial model agent before she became a player agent. Her talents came from various parts of the world and her clients were global. Jimmy believed she must be earning a pile in dollars, not to mention the international network of connections she has established.

IN HUDDLE



Butch Cuiba

"I got into managing import agent mostly because my boyfriend then needed an agent to negotiate the kind of fee he was to be paid by his US agent. From there I hooked up with athletic shoe manufacturers and distributors, providing them with endorsers. Then in year 2007, I was asked to co-manage Air Swoosh."

In 2008, feeling that she already had the experience and know-how in local and foreign player managements, she brought in imports Ji Sullinger and James Penny to play for the Cebu Tigers, alongside Enchon. Pretty soon she was bringing in more imports to the PBA, among them Shaun Stonerook, Reggie Lerry, Keenan Young, Lenny Hitchcock and Sammy Mozone.

* * *

Sheryl didn't stop there as distant horizons beckoned. There was a demand for foreign talents as call imports for the Philippine Cup, for example, and the Dominican Republic, where she now regularly scouts players.

This year she will also go Asian as she was asked to cater to ABL teams.

"I will have good imports for the ABL—Al Johnson for the Philippine Patriots, Kevin Wilde for Brunei, Marcus Skliver for the Singapore Slingers and Jamal Holden for Indonesia. I also got a contract for Fil-Am Alex Crisano with the Dakota," Sheryl said.

* * *

Because she sees scoring as many countries worldwide, she sees sought the attention of the Fiba, where she had to submit accreditations before she could send imports to various countries.

It had to take the required examinations in Sydney this year. Last conference, I received communication from the Fiba that I had passed the exams."

To my knowledge, she is the only Fil-Am accredited agent here in the Philippines.

Do line mate scouts/para consider her a threat?

"No, she's a good friend and business associate. It's give and take for the two of us," said fellow agent Charlie Ho.

As for Sheryl, she says she doesn't really consider the male agents competitors.

"I look up to them and just do my job well, working 24/7. I watch tapes and find good imports to supply my clients. I always aim to make a good impression on the amount time I am serving."

Sheryl admits her work is financially rewarding.

"However, my work doesn't start and end with getting a commission. I make sure I'm on top of everything until the player's contract ends. I make sure I know what's going on, especially in situations when my player is injured."

Sheryl says has gone a long way from the time she was introduced to me by Danny Espiritu five years ago or maybe even more. Now I am impressed.

* * *

HOOPSNOTE: The PBA board leaves today for Bangkok for its first planning session under new PBA commissioner Chito Salud and 2010-2011 board chairman Ricky Vargas of B-Meg Derby Ace. The session was initially set first week of September in Hong Kong, but was moved to another date and place because of the hostage crisis... Text message from former PBA commissioner Noli Eala: "Read your Sept. 8 column on Ned Sarmiña. I remember him wanting to apply as PBA referee, but I don't recall though an office Dominic Uy referee's association. Best of things. He also claims he "wrote Mar-ole Tapa" that Chito Narvasa sells beer in the Philippines."... While the Fuhsing game for the ailing Abe Gall shot in Tacoco City was a huge success, word has it that the conditions of the PBA players have not changed for the worse, his muscles weakening considerably. He is due for an operation first week of October.

DAPUDONG

Mexican strips Dapudong of 'fly' title

MEXICAN CHALLENGER Wilbert Uicab dethroned Filipino Efren Dapudong in his first defense of the WBC silver flyweight title with a unanimous decision Friday at the Convention Center in Cancun, Mexico.

Dapudong, who was favored to win, allowed the experienced Mexican to take control in the early rounds before staging a comeback which proved a little too late, according to Ben Smith, who owns the American Boxing Academy in Dipar City in Davao del Sur.

Smith said all three judges gave the fight to Uicab with scores of 117-111, 116-111 and 116-113.

Uicab took the first five rounds with Dapudong getting dedicated a point for a four-blow in round five after he was warned for a similar illegal blow moments ago.

Smith reported that Dapudong "didn't look warmed up and was out sweating and stained with wild punches" early in the fight but started his rally with a solid showing in rounds six and seven.

Despite the loss, Smith said Dapudong will be a force in the light flyweight division, which is his real fighting weight.

Dapudong's manager, former North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol, had allowed Dapudong to fight for the WBC silver flyweight title against Mexican Jesus Iberrose because they got a good offer.

Dapudong went on to register a good impression among Mexican fans with a stunning first round knockout of the then No. 1 ranked Iberrose. Ronnie Nathanielsz

World champion overwhelms Aparri in s'finals

LIGHT FLYWEIGHT Aiko Kate Aparri lost in four-time world champion Mary Kom of India, 9-3, in the semifinals of the 5th World Women's Boxing Championships at the Garfield Sobers Sports Complex in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Aparri ended for the bronze medal.

The score did not reflect the competitive action put up by Aparri, who had previously lost to the Indian mother of two from Malipu in their only face-off in 2006. With the win, Kom remained a firm favorite for a historic fifth successive gold medal.

Amateur Boxing association of the Philippines executive director Ed Picson said the bronze that Kom won "is very silly fighter who was hard to hit, while she was also very aggressive and really a top class boxer."

Before the bout against the South east Asian Games gold medalist Aparri, Kom said "I know the girl. I beat her in 2009 and hopefully even this time I would win. I will try my best. I have my fingers crossed for a fifth consecutive gold."

Kom set up the clash with Aparri by beating Lynsey Holloway of Wales, 9-2, in the quarterfinals. Kom held a slim 2-1 margin at the end of the first round of that match and both on it in the next two rounds to lead 6-2 before she finished an all-out attack to clinch the victory.

Aparri, for her part, scored an impressive 8-2 victory over Brand Rodtheerasukta of Sri Lanka. Rodtheerasukta edged Lee Jaeding of the powerhouse Ukina squad, 7-3.

Aparri began her quest for a medal with a smashing 13-1 win over an outclassed Semante Sipestrene of Liberia and followed up by turning back Esperanza Quinones of Puerto Rico, 8-1, in the round of sixteen in what was considered one of the biggest upsets of the tournament.

Kazumaryngin Tenday Pereira put up a gallant stand before bowing to another rugged Russian in Elena Savelyeva, 11-5.

Mukhtabol Amin Allaeva proved to be a disappointment when she led 6-2 at the end of the second round against the experienced Simeyra Sinici of Turkey but began to shutdown and eventually lost, 7-4. Ronnie Nathanielsz

SPORTSWATCH

DUBSMAT GOGGIES Members of the 16-years-and-above team of the PCYBA squad that voluntarily took in the recent Asian Veterans International Basketball tournament in Malaysia are honored during a victory party recently. The team members are: (seated from left) Coumal Sy, Johnny Chua, Edmart Tio, Jimi Lim, Erik Lincoln Bulatlat, Terry Que of Rain or Shine, Lim Eng Beng and Ching Ka Lee. Standing (from left) are Mario Mg, Mario Lee, Freddie Hokaldo, Terry Kalalata, Elmar Reyes, Gabby Velasco, Kenneth Yap and coach Jake de Guia.

HOOP CHAMPS The Lyceum basketball squad, led by UAAP3 coach Eric Estrella, coach Dennis Tan and assistant coach Chris Flores, reached the Inter-Scholastic Athletic Association basketball tournament finals via a sweep.

Alabang, Cangolf top sixth WGAP tourney

ALABANG, GETTING 38 points each from Lorna Tabucon and Bea Flores, topped Sta. Elena, 340-340, to top the premier division in the sixth leg of the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines at De Candidong layout in Laguna.

Marilyn Reyes chipped in with 36 and Norma Cortes accounted for 34 as Alabang stacked second overtops on Sta. Elena, which beat Alabang in its home turf in the second leg recently.

Sta Cruz fired 35 and Ayessi Montero had 36 for Sta. Elena, which could only dum 34 from Hyun-Shimizu and 33 from Cornelia Lee.

Candolonga pocketed third spot, Dumlao is a 40 points of Lucy Lumbrales, which was unbeaten in its outing in the tournament.

The Cangolf lass also drew 34 from Lina de Guzman, 33 from Teresa Crispin and 32 from Ruby Rio for its 118.

Villasisi, winner at Valley in the kickoff leg, placed fourth with a 137 followed by Tagaytay Highlands (133), Ayalabido (129), Forest Hills (114), Valles Golf and Riviera.

Candolonga, consistent, backed out a one-point victory over Highlands, 344-343, for the Group 2 crown with Taytay Lomo leading the hosts' charge with 41 points. Pamela Jimenez had 39 while Tessy Pastrin and Suzy Barrientos added 34 and 32 points, respectively.

Highlands, winner of three previous legs, drew 37 points from Judy Jose and "became a Valisco with Sec winning the individual plum.

Mabel Rowark made 35 points while Marlene Vergara added 34 points.

Alabang came in third with a 325 followed by Forest Hills (318), Sta. Elena (312) while Villasisi and Riviera made similar 156s.

Aguinaldo continued to lord it over the Class C field as it picked up its fourth win with a 153 total for a 17-point jump over Highlands, which had a 136.

Crucial Magnolia kart leg up

JUNIOR KARTERS home for tough challenges as they gun for coveted slots on the "hot" up their championship bids in the sixth and penultimate leg of the 2010 Magnolia Powerade Racing Super Series at the Clark International Speedway in Pampanga.

Cebuano Jovie Calderon and Jet Racing's Christian Gadd hope to preserve solo leadership in their respective divisions.

But with the wide-open today

Cuppers stay alive as Mamiit, Huey score

CEBU, MANILA – Mamiit backed a booming triple-header and teamed up with Treat Huey to win the doubles yesterday and keep the Philippine Davis Cup hopes alive in its Asia/Oceania Group I tie against host South Korea.

The 19-Asa partnership downed Kim Hyun-joon and Seol Jae-min, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, as the Giovanni Lhuillier Davis Cup squad remained alive after dropping the rare opening singles Friday at the Changwon Municipal Tennis Courts.

Mamiit and Huey took over from Adonay Arcilla and Albert Amores, who were earlier nominated to play doubles.

The 24-year-old Mamiit retained his hitting hand during his opening singles match against 17-year-old Jeong Suk-young, came back from two sets down to win the second singles, 0-6, 1-6, 6-2, 6-0, 6-2.

But the playing team captain said he felt his body had recovered very well overnight and he decided to play in the doubles matches.

"Until just decided to play the doubles this morning and had a meeting during breakfast with the team," said team manager Jean Henri Lhuillier.

Davis Cup rules allow changes in lineup one hour before the matches. Arcilla, an experienced Davis Cupper, acted as team captain during the doubles.

Mamiit will try to sustain 38% momentum when he takes on Korea's top player, 19-year-old Lim Yong-kyu, in the first of the two reverse singles today.

Huey handles Jeong in the second reverse singles.

"At least we all know now that both the reverse singles are winnable," added a relieved Lhuillier after the two-hour doubles match.

Lim drew first blood for the Koreans by beating Huey, 6-7 (6-10), 6-2, 7-6 (9-7), 7-6 (7-4), in a marathon head-to-toe for the Filipino Cuppers.

The Philippines, losers to Japan and Chinese Taipei early this year, is trying to avoid sliding back to Group II like South Korea, which fell to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in its two previous ties.

The odds are stacked against the Filipinos as the Koreans have won the last five of eight ties.

Abet/Anthony Reyes

SPEED "BATA" Reyes flashes vintage form in rolling back Robert Gomez.

'Bata' snatches Predator title from Gomez

'I thought I was going to lose, 10-1,' says Reyes

By Cedelf F. Tapas

SPEED "BATA" REYES thought he'll never pull off some of the shots that made him one of billiard's biggest names in the world and earned him the moniker "Magician."

It turned out he didn't need much of that wizardry yesterday.

In a finals inching two-inspiring shots that have become a trademark of Filipino billiards, Reyes prevailed over compatriot Robert Gomez, 10-5, to snatch the 10th Annual Predator International 10-Ball Championship at the Black in Hill North Edsa in Quezon City.

"This win is special because there are few tournaments being held here in the Philippines," the 38-year-old Reyes, winner of the World 9-Ball Championship in 1999, said in Filipino.

"I thought I was going to lose, 10-1, with the way Robert was playing but I guess I got lucky again."

Capitalizing on Gomez's poor positional plays and safety shots, Reyes rallied from 1-5 down to reach the hill first after the 17th rack, when Gomez made a horrible safety on the set 3 that opened up the table for Reyes for an easy clearout.

Gomez struck back on the next rack, though, winning a brief exchange of safeties before cleaning up the table with ease.

He looked headed to finally doubling his cushion-lacking lag that has haunted him since crumbling in the preseason-packed World Pool Championship finals against Englishman Daryl Peach in Manila three years ago after making it to hill-hill games.

But after posting the yellow 1, Gomez was forced to play scratchy on No. 2 after failing to gain position for his next shot. A poor safety then allowed Reyes to look in the blue 2.

Reyes cleaned up the rack to claim the $5,000 top purse and his second title of the year, after the Derby City Classic in the United States in January.

It was the second come-from-behind victory for the day for Reyes, who also crossed an early deficit to topple American Rodney Morris, 9-5, in the semifinals.

Gomez flashed inspiration form in clipping of Lee Van Corteza, 9-3, in the other semifinal duel, but just couldn't get over the hump in a final of a major tournament.

"I'm getting used to second place," said Gomez, who settled for the runner-up purse $3,000 and also claimed second recently with Dennis Orcollo in the recent World Cup of Pool won by China's Li Hewen and Fu Jianbo. "But I associate consolation on the fact that this is my best performance in a finals match."

Abueva named NCAA's player of the week

JOEL SEBASTIAN forward Calvin Abueva helped make sure the dethroning champions Letran stayed in the hunt for the top seed in the 86th NCAA basketball tournament.

Abueva fired 16 points, including the game-winning basket with seven seconds remaining, as San Sebastian edged Letran, 70-56, for its 12th win in 15 outings last Thursday.

The Stags looked out-of-synch and played with little energy until Abueva refocused to the court in the final period to fire up the defending champions, who face a tough two-week schedule starting Monday.

"Calvin provided us the aggressiveness to win the game," said San Sebastian coach Aric Agustin of his prized forward, who nailed his third double-double this season.

Abueva, the MVP derby leader after the first round, also finished with 10 rebounds to produce his 11th double-double for the season.

Abueva bested Mapua's Allan Mangahas, who unloaded 24 points in a 79-72 victory over Perpetual Help last Wednesday.

Crucial PBA board meeting in Bangkok today

By Rhaeng R. Cuello

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association's board of governors tackles the thirtieth issue of whether to lend players to the Jordan-based Philippine team during its second planning session set in Bangkok today.

Kelly Williams, Jeff Taulava and reigning MVP James Yap are on the watch list of the Smart-Gilas Pilipinas five that will play in the Guangzhou Asian Games tournament.

Rene Pardo, the Dolfo Asia representative, will formally take over as chair of the board with the other officers to also start assuming their posts.

Lawyer Mamerto Mendigoras of Bais ca Shine will be the new vice chief, while Presidents Jose Raymi Hopkins will be the body's new treasurer.

The members of the board will leave at 10:30 this morning on a PAL flight today.

The board will also discuss the proposed rules changes on the officiating by new commissioner Chito Salud.

"We believe the simplified version of the rules will prevent confusion and errors," Salud said.

With the help of Solar TV, Salud said that the league will use all available technology to aid the referees in providing better officiating.

The bright hint of reinforcements for the tournament-spiced season will also be on the agenda.

Surgery planned for Guidaben

By Ronnie Nathaniel

FORMER TWO-TIME PBA MVP Alex Guidaben will most likely go under the knife to remove his thrown-gland after initial physical examinations and medicines have not worked according to expectations.

The new UE-based former Crispa center and member of the PBA's 25 All-Time Greatest Players has complained of continued weakening of the upper body and rapid weight loss.

Jennifer Michaels, an internist and oncologist at the University Medical and Hospital in Sorsogon, prescribed to treating Guidaben, has prescribed strongest medicines but said that the operation should really be done.

Guidaben has been instructed to return on Oct. 4 for final clearances and then two days later for a conference with a medical specialist who will operate on him. The surgery might be done a week after Oct. 4.

PBA Legends USA Foundation secretary general Rolly Ignacio, who spoke to Guidaben right after his appointment with Dr. Michaels, is considering why the ex-cager is continuing to lose weight despite his huge appetite.

"The doctor (Michaels) was in a quandary, too," Ignacio told the Inquirer.

The PBA board had donated P200,000, converted to $5,405, to aid in Guidaben's recovering, hospital bills. Guidaben expressed his gratitude for the board's help as well as the help earlier provided by Sen. Miguel Coop, president Ramon Ang, who also donated $5,000.

NU spikers battle St. Dominic Savio

NATIONAL U hopes to rebound from a four-set loss for first time out as it takes on a debuting St. Dominic Savio side at reorganization of action of the first | SC Men's Volleyball League at the Arellano gymnasium (Taytay).

The Bulldogs dropped a 19-25, 19-25, 28-26, 20-25 setback to the Brothers Chiefs last Wednesday but are confident of their chances against the S. Lions hosters in the one-session match in Group B.

Game time is at 9:30 a.m.

The opening match marks the start of the fourth playdate of the league carrying on the revival of the men's volley circuit sponsored by LBC that Ing Pantaleon headed by chief marketing director Jary Manzano.

International School Manila takes on Maryknoll High School at 10 a.m. while Claret, which thrashed CSB, 25-8, 25-13, last week, goes for its second straight win and the win-tied against Angeles Univ. Foundation at 11 a.m.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Mosley eyes career revival vs 'Contender'

LOS ANGELES—Shane Mosley, whose five-title career seemed all but over after a lopsided loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr in May, will seek to put himself back in the title mix when he takes on fringe Hora on Saturday.

Mosley, 39, will return to the scene of two of his biggest triumphs when he faces Kermit Pfeifel Boxing Council light middleweight champion Hora, a fellow American, at the Staples Center.

"I have to get past Sergio Mora," Mosley said this week. "I thank him for taking the fight and accepting the challenge. This guy is not someone to take lightly.

"He beat Vernon Forrest, I never beat the late great Vernon Forrest. He is a competitor and he comes to win."

Mosley rocked Mayweather in the second round but Ming but battled back in the final 10 rounds.

Veteran trainer Emanuel Steward noted in his television commentary that Mosley was "looking his age" during the fight.

Mosley, who owns a record of 46-6 with 39 knockouts, says he's "feeling better" than he did at his pre-May weather training camp, "feeling more sharp," he says.

The fight will be contested at 154 pounds, rather than Mosley's usual class of 147. He said that he considered opponents other than the taller and heavier Hora, whose victory in the 2005 reality television show "The Contender" gave him some prominence but also caused some boxing purists to fancy him.

"I have a lot of qualities that [have] been overlooked because of television," said Mora, who brings a record of 22-1-1 with six knockouts to the bout. "I entered my spot on 'The Contender.'

"Now, it is time. It is my time now and I'm excited about that."

The undercard of a promotion celebrating Mexican Independence features Montana sensation Saul "Canelo" Alvarez taking on Argentinean veteran Carlos Baldomir.

Alvarez, whose clutch of ginger hair and freckles gave him his nickname—which means cinnamon—will face the biggest test of his career to the 33-year-old Baldomir.

Promoter Oscar De La Hoya believes the pay-per-view hour could be a launching pad for the 20-year-old Alvarez, a hotshot who turned pro at 15 and put together an impressive run of seven straight knockout victories in 2008-09.

Outside the ring, Alvarez has rankings of a crossover celebrity—much like de la Hoya himself.

He's in a paparazzi-pleasing relationship with television reporter and former Miss Universe contestant Montrel Gonzalez.

SHANE Mosley (left) won't take Sergio Mora for granted. AFP

The son of a boxer trainer, Alvarez is a born star, and De La Hoya said his appearances on Sunshine Jam add to his appeal as female fans.

"The girls love seeing him on a horse—I say it," de la Hoya said.

"He's already a rock star with Mexicans," De La Hoya said of Alvarez (33-0-1, 25 KOs). "If he wins Saturday, the same thing is going to start happening all over the world for Canelo. I think he'll become a man on Saturday." AFP

Lady Falcons eye V-League sweep

By Cedell P. Tupas

ADAMSON SEEKS to wrap up its second crown when it shoots for a sweep of San Sebastian-Recoletos in Game 2 of their best-of-three Chelsea's V-League Season 7 Second Conference finals series at the FEUD Diliman V. Inciong Sr. Sports Complex.

The Lady Falcons can join University of Santo Tomas and De La Salle University as the elite group of teams with at least two V-League crowns each with a victory in their 4 p.m. duel with the Lady Stags.

UST which skipped the tournament, defendedly owns six titles, while La Salle has three.

"We are finish this on Sunday (today)," a confident Adamson coach Dakot Pamo said after her Lady Falcons survived a tough-nosed over the Lady Stags to force a last Thursday.

The Lady Falcons leaned on their receive-dig game again in barking out a thrilling 25-18, 25-17, 30-32, 21-25, 15-13 victory, their third win over the Lady Stags in the tournament.

San Sebastian coach Roger Gorayeb is optimistic that the Lady Stags can find a way to extend the series to a decoding game on Thursday.

"We must play aggressive from start to finish, we couldn't afford to play like we did in Game One because we know Adamson is going to make us pay," said Gorayeb.

The Lady Stags played sluggish in the first two sets, before coming alive in the next two frames.

But they left it late in the fifth with Sierra Bautista and Angela Benting delivering decisive hits for the Lady Falcons.

More than Bautista's attacking prowess, blocking has been Adamson's biggest weapon against the Lady Stags who boast of the strongest hitters in the league in Jessy Rondina, Suzanne Roces and Joy Benitez.

Benting has also been a rock on defense, covering a lot of ground on the backline especially when Rondina attacks.

Michelle Laborte, the lead blocker for the Philippine Team earlier in the decade, provides the Lady Falcons with strong defensive presence, while serving as mentors in spinners Mia Enriquez and Gel Martin.

Adamson scored 16 points off blocks to Game 1 with Laborte and Roces combining for 11.

San Sebastian is also gunning for a second crown in its seventh finals appearance.

"We must play smarter and be composed in crunch time," said Gorayeb.

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ADAMSON'S Cris Benting chases San Sebastian's Bernal Mirasol. Benting has been a rock defensively, helping the Lady Falcons record it over in the tennis category. ALBERT DIAZ FILE

Rodriguez homers lift NY Yankees past Orioles

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND—Alex Rodriguez lost a three-run homer run, his second homer of the game, in the top of the ninth inning to help the New York Yankees to a 4-3 victory over the Baltimore Orioles on Friday.

The win, combined with Tampa Bay's 4-1 loss to the Los Angeles Angels, allowed the Yankees to overtake the Rays in the tight American League East race.

The Yankees were trailing, 3-1, before Rodriguez smashed his 29th home run off relief pitcher Kirk Urbana. Mariano Rivera then pitched a perfect ninth inning for his 31st save.

Urbana thought he had struck out Rodriguez to finish the game, but did not get the call from home plate umpire Joe Barrett.

"I was where I am looking, I could see their whole dugout," Rodriguez said. "And their whole dugout literally jumped... leaping at us, pacing that to be similar during. So they laughed at me, and I laughed at them a little bit."

Substitutes Kevin Millwood and Yankees starter AJ Burnett had dueled through seven innings before both left the game with the Orioles leading, 3-1.

Millwood gave up a homer to Rodriguez to start the second inning but escaped further damage by retiring three Yankees batters. He allowed just three hits over his final five innings.

Burnett gave up solo home runs to Adam Jones (fourth inning) and Robert Andino (seventh), while Nick Markakis' sacrifice fly brought home Cesar Izturis in the third.

Burnett allowed three runs on six hits with a walk, striking out five while Millwood finished with five hits, four walks and struck out one batter.

"When you're down and you win like that, that's pretty big, especially the way we've been playing," said Yankees catcher Jorge Posada, who led off the ninth inning with a single.

"It was like this really helps us...helps us mentally." Reuters

Murakami eight strokes off Wiratchant with 72

DUBAI—Ayumu Murakami settled for a level par 72 after spattering on the final 3 nine to join a five-way tie for 10th place after three rounds of the inaugural Shanghai Tournament Players Championship (TPC) Saturday.

Murakami, who hit the turn at 3-under 33 with birdies on three of the first five holes, totalled 214 after 54 holes and trailed Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant by eight strokes.

Ayumu Lazarda shot a 71 for 216 while Jeeto Pagunsan and countrymate Gerald Rosales dropped deep down in the field at 224 after carding 77s.

Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant, the 11-time Asian Tour winner, fired a 70 to keep the lead by one over veteran Chinese Phadungsil with a 10-under total of 206 going in overnight a three-day total of 18-under par 200.

Chinnarong removed sixth the day's best score of 67 to take second place at 207 with Malaysia's Iain Steel a further shot back in third after the Malaysian added a 71 to his previous rounds of 66 and 68.

American rookie Ben Bea together with Australia's David Gleeson took a share of fourth place on matching 209s.

Asian Tour News

RP golfers show way in Malaysian Jr Open

MIYUKI YAMUSHA of the Philippines, priming up for a tougher tournament ahead, fired a two-under par 70 on Friday to take a one-shot lead over countryman Clyde Mondilla at the start of the Malaysian Junior Open in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

The 14-year-old, who will play his first international open next's tournament for the Philippines in the Putra Cup later this month, had a 34-36 card to post the strong start and lead the outgoing RP Amateur championship Mondilla.

After going out with a 39, Mondilla, who spent the limited here in the last RP tee-held in his hometown of Del Monte in Bukidnon, faltered with a 36 in his final nine to settle for a 72.

Sarah Abeba, meanwhile, fired a 75 and grabbed a slender third over Vivian Chee of Malaysia in the girls side of the 54-hole event featuring players 13-18 years of age.

Local hero Brad Lua and Hanbin Hamdin fired identical 74s for third while Chan Tuck Yuen, also of Malaysia, stood a shot further back at 75 followed Simo Gita.

Pat and Kenneth Kano, who both carded 76s.

Takuma is without a doubt one of the finest age-groupers in the region, and his talent made the National Golf Association of the Philippines top here for the Putra Cup team.

He is partner Jill Ann championa Micah Fernando, Josiel Alcera and Jessie Bulanhon in the squad that will try to win the Putra Cup, regarded as Southeast Asia's official team championship, for the first time since 1991.

Abeba bubbled on her homestead trip with a 37 marred by three bogeys and two doubles.

Two other Malaysians, Starchrisyah Bassian and Kelly Tan, stood with the four strokes off the pace after 9 3s.

RYDER CUP

Pavin: Woods could have reduced role

TIGER Woods still casts an intimidating presence. AFP

LOS ANGELES—Corey Pavin has no concerns about Tiger Woods' position for Ryder Cup play, even if he doesn't choose the world's top player for every matchmaker month in Wales.

Pavin praised Woods' debut and teamwork Friday while discussing his final preparations for the Ryder Cup, which will be held Oct. 1 to 3.

Pavin has spent plenty of time poring over possible pairings in the past several weeks, but wasn't ready to reveal any decisions. He got a list of preferred partners from each player, but hasn't promised he'll stick to them.

Although the Americans are considered underdogs against a powerful European team that has more familiarity with the Celtic Manor course, Pavin is planning a close-knit, entertaining week for his players.

In London, Padraig Harrington is refusing to underestimate Ohtels heading into next month's Ryder Cup, insisting the American retains an "unbeatable aura" despite his lack of success this year.

The No. 1-ranked Woods only made it into the United States team after being given a wild card by Pavin and has not won a tournament this year.

"To many wins the Ryder Cup could be the pinnacle of his year," Harrington said Friday. "Definitely he'll be in a fighting mood for the week...a mood to perform."

Woods has been on the winning side only once as a Ryder Cup, in 1999, and has earned just 11 points from a possible 25 in five appearances. The 14-time major winner missed the US victory over Europe in Valhalla, New York in 2008 with a knee injury.

"He's coming into this Ryder Cup not having succeeded and achieved a lot of his goals this year," Harrington said. "He's coming in thinking, 'I want to play well in this Ryder Cup to make me have a successful year.'

"He is the No.1 golfer in the world still by rankings ... he has a presence—an intimidation factor."

Harrington also had to rely on a captain's pick to make the transition to Celtic Manor.

Europe captain Colin Montgomerie said he could not go into the match without the three-time major champion as the experienced Harrington was consistent. "we feel that nobody is match-play golf seems to play."

Others urged Harrington as a controversial pick who was fortunate to have been given the nod ahead of No. 7-ranked Stuart Cink, having only won half a point from a possible four in 2008. He had the same total in 2006 but from five matches.

"When you get picked, you are under the spotlight more," said Harrington, who is without a tour win in more than two years. AP

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Sunday BIZ

Health drink vendor savors fruit of his labor

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

WHEN SETTING up a business, one either introduces a new concept or finds a niche or a gap in the industry on which to pounce.

Lester C. Yu is fond of health drinks. It dawned on him one day that there was a huge moneyplowed market for affordable health drinks.

"At that time (when we were conceptualizing a business about fruit shakes), existing fruit shakes players were situated at high-end places like Makati and Ortigas offices, malls, and commercial buildings. We saw the untapped ... middle class market. At that time, we were also anticipating that the market was gearing up for healthier products," Yu tells InsideBiz.

Health craze

Believing that the less middle class would also appreciate healthy drinks, he set up Fruitas.

Yu is the founder and owner of Fruita shake kiosks all over Metro Manila, with 200 stalls to date. When he put up Fruitas in 2002, it was the start of the health consciousness era in the country, he says.

It was around that time that the movie "Super Size Me" was shown. The movie was a documentary of a man who only ate fast-food hamburgers morning, noon and night time for weeks, which resulted in weight gain and a host of health problems.

Entrepreneurial spirit

After finishing Industrial Engineering at De La Salle University, Yu joined Metrobank Bank and, after four and a half years, became a branch head.

But the entrepreneurial blood was there in his veins and soon, Yu went into business starting out as an importer of toys and kitchenware.

He eventually shelved the business to focus on the health industry.

"Because of limited resources, we decided to focus on Fruitas especially since we were starting to feel its potential as a business," he admits.

The Fruitas stalls were a far cry from that of Lush, another Yu venture and a competitor of Zagu, which was the craze in the 1990s.

Although the Zagu craze fizzled out, along with Lush, there still was a huge market for flavored powder drinks with black pearls (sago), he recalls.

Juice Avenue

Since he set up Fruitas, Yu was creating new ventures almost every year.

In September 2006, he put up Juice Avenue, another fruit kiosk targeting the upper market with its smoothies—a juice concoction with milk or vanilla ice cream.

The following year, he set up Bake-ni Fruitas. It now has 150 outlets.

As the name suggests, it is basically coconut mixed with fruits, or strips of bake mixed with various concoctions.

Although Yu had to sell the Lush outlets, he noted that the market for such drinks was still strong. He has set up Black Pearls in 2006. Today, it has top more than 90 outlets.

"After a few years of operating Fruitas, we saw a certain market segment that Fruitas was not able to tap. It was the mass market. Setting up Black Pearl was a way for us to serve that specific market," he explains.

That same year, he put up Bo Mango Farm. Its first branch opened on Dec. 1.

Two years ago, Yu set up Cocolatte, a dessert place "reminiscent of the dessert bars in New York."

The bar serves desserts shakes, mixed fruits and coffee. It also serves lunch and dinner meals like pasta, sandwiches and rice meals.

So far it has five outlets—Ali Mall, Shangri-La Plaza, Trinoma, Robinson's Ermita and E. Jurado on Pasong Morato.

And what has the 35-year-old business for the future?

"We still plan to expand continuously through the following: tools/premises, launches of new concept brands, mergers and acquisitions, and international expansion," Yu says.

LESTER Yu and his resource. More are on the way.

Want to be a success? Celebrate

"Failure is not an option."
—Gene Kranz, Apollo 13

UNLESS YOU'RE skydiving, nightscope stalking, or trying to land a space shuttle, failure is an option. In fact, the most successful people usually are the ones who have failed the most. Undivid to take risks, they stumble frequently but in doing so they learn valuable lessons and improve themselves.

Consider Google. The California-based firm revolutionized Internet search technology and Internet advertising, and it has created a host of innovative tools such as its mapping service (Google Maps), e-mail platform (Gmail), Web browser (Google Chrome), and mobile phone operating system (Android).

But spectacular successes rarely come without spectacular failures. The company massively misfired with Google Wave, a web application designed to integrate e-mail, social networking and instant messaging. On August 4th, Google announced its decision to shut down the high-profile project, but even a year after its launch, in explaining the decision, Google CEO Eric Schmidt asserted the company's attitude toward the situation:

"We celebrate our failures. This is a company where it's absolutely OK to try something that's very hard, have it not be successful, and take the learning from that."

Celebrating failure

Leaders set the tone for how their people view failure, in particular the extent leaders can take toward failure affects an organization's tolerance for risk, openness, creativity and teamwork. With so much at stake, how can leaders create a culture in which failure is celebrated rather than feared?

1) Encourage risk-taking.

Leaders invite their people to take risks when they extend them with the authority to make decisions and the responsibility to exercise their own judgments. People who are empowered (even without having to seek the approval of higher-ups) may mistep occasionally but, in the long run, they'll learn invaluable lessons and gain confidence in their own abilities.

2) Set expectations.

Leaders do engineers failure by setting the expectations that, from time to time, people will mess up. Instead of treating an epic failure as a wound leaders simply devour progress. They remove themselves with effort rather than berating only on outcomes. To this end, they don't punish failure; they welcome it as a natural part of life and a necessary step in the process of learning as a leader.

3) Interpret setbacks

Some people are their own worst critics. After making a mistake, they have trouble recovering and moving on. Leaders come alongside their teammates to help them interpret failure. Instead of equating an error with disaster, leaders point to the slip-up as a portal of discovery. They frame failure as a learning opportunity and cue it to interact and guide team members.

Attend the 53rd Developing The Leader Within You workshop with Maxwell certified facilitator Pamela Reing on Sept. 28-29 at the John Silvanger Center, DAP Dagitan Leadership Consultancy at 8872634/7894913 or visit us at www.dapcleaders.com.ph.

A FARMER harvests "tinawon" rice at Malig-cong, Bontoc, Mountain Province.

A FARMER harvests "tinawon" rice at Malig-cong, Bontoc, Mountain Province.

Cordillera organic rice finds a strong market at home

ISOROY (inset) as grass through dance how their parents traditionally harvest rice.

Text and photos by EV Espiritu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Organic rice grown in the Cordillera's upland farms, including the Ifugao rice terraces, have been directed at an American market in the last four years.

But a growing domestic demand by Ifugao "tinawon" and Kalinga "upland" may mean a more sustainable trade finally for mountain rice, according to traders and experts who participated in an organic rice fair here recently.

Cordillera growers, some of whom exported indigenous Cordillera rice varieties to the United States under the brand "Eight Wonders" displayed their products at the Malcolm Square here recently to showcase the progress made in marketing Kalinga's red and violet rice, which some restaurants offer for such a high price due to its scarcity.

Maria Victoria Garcia, executive director of the Provincial Indigenous Cordillera Entrepreneurs Inc. (PICE), helped open the Montana market for upland rice farms in 2000 when she and Mary Hensley, a former US Peace Corps volunteer, realized the potential commercial value of upland rice.

The brand "Eighth Wonder" referred to the Ifugao rice terraces, which experts considered one of the world's natural wonders built in the 1500s.

During that period, Ifugao folk had started to move to the urban areas, abandoning their families' rice terraces which produce only enough to feed a farmer's household.

Four years later, PICE's efforts empowered enough farmers who began producing their own varieties.

Bernanda Calbayao, who had been marketing Kalinga's "unoy" variety to many trade fairs, said she was enlightened by a trader during an event in Metro Manila.

The trader, Calbayao said, asked her: "Why do we let foreigners buy healthy organic rice when we, Filipinos, should be reaping its fruits?"

Calbayao used to chair the Kalinga Organic Unoy Rice Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative, which supplies PICE for its Montana shipments.

Because farm work was seasonal, the cooperative had been able to produce no more than 2 metric tons (MT) of "unoy" for PICE.

Disenchanted, the cooperative reviewed their operations in 2007 and proceeded to repackage their produce to achieve export-quality standards before they began marketing "unoy" though every trade fair that turned down, Calbayao said.

She said the Philippine demand for "unoy" turned out to be much higher than the 7 MT of rice which PICE contracted them to produce in 2006.

Kalinga has over 33,177 hectares of rice farms and had been tapped to pilot hybrid rice production during the term of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

But approximately 60 to 70 hectares of rice farms in the capital Tabuk had been devoted to organic rice, which produces 40 cavans per hectare of "unoy" farmers noted when they sold a kilo of "unoy" for as much as P140 a kilogram during trade fairs, Calbayao said.

Sales were always high, leaving them with few stocks that they had to turn down a Metro Manila restaurant which required 20 cavans of "unoy" each month, she said.

PICE had been good for Ifugao's "tinawon" variety which found 10 and European markets after decades when people barely had interest in the grains produced by the province's centuries-old terraces.

The traditional Ifugao farmer produces only enough rice to feed his family.

Maayaon now has 1,300 hectares of rice terraces devoted to "tinawon," a variety named after the practice of planting and harvesting rice only once a year. These terraces has 800 hectares planted with "tinawon."

But PICE's "tinawon" suppliers also had difficulty increasing their export quotas last year, said Andrea Lang-ih, Ifugao provincial agriculturist.

Hungduan town had been burdened by a shifting climate and pests so farmers could not generate their average produce of 2,679.6 MT of "tinawon" which per grains on 917 hectares of farms.

There low points also forced these farmers to source their requests, before they proceeded to improve their own systems, Lang-ih said.

Although Filipinos have ordinary and thick rice, the exotic rice, upland and "tinawon," have not dropped their tastes.

Jovita Carmen, coordinator of the Heirloom Rice Project in Mt. Province, said PICE helped them develop the brand, "Ignorot Rice."

Mt. Province has 6,000 hectares devoted to "Ignorot Rice" and farmers there harvested up to 3.5 MT from each hectare.

Carmen said PICE bought 2.2 MT of "Ignorot Rice" in 2009 and 3.4 MT in 2010, for a price ranging from P65 to P80 a kg depending on the available volumes of "solid" (not dirty), "luxurious" (red and black rice), "habitanag" or "artistic" (glutinous black and white rice), and "chocolate rice" (red and white rice).

Benguet, a province noted for its vegetables, has been growing rice, too.

Kibungan, a town famous for its organic production, has allocated 524 hectares for "Kintoman" and produces other varieties like "labaka," "bengbeng" and "diklatan" (glutinous rice) which sell for P70 to P80 a kg, said Felix Tebwa, the town's agriculturist.

He said it takes a farmer at least seven hours of hiking to reach some of these farmlands. (With a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon)

NONGLIBA Tebwa, 52, grows "kintoman" in Barangay Palina, Kibungan, Benguet.

ILUMINADA Calbayao (center) believes there is a domestic market for "unoy" rice, an export commodity since 1996.

THE "TINAWON" palay in Hungduan, Ifugao is divided by the roadside.

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Laundry venture talk set

SOMEDAYS laundry business is becoming to be a profitable business since it fulfills a basic necessity in life. It's a simple reason and one he run with no experience—just a matter of educating yourself first to learn the ropes of the laundry shop operation.

The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a two-day seminar on laundry shop operation to be held at the PTTC, Km. 4, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Bonbon Blvd., Mezia, cor. Jimenez Cliff Private Ave. On Sept. 18 and 19, Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The seminar will give participants basic information on getting started on the business, marketing operations, and possibly branching out.

Additional topics to be discussed are the basic types of services, the set-up of a laundry shop, equipment to use, workflows, pin-opening factors, marketing strategies, staffing, and organization.

For questions call 4267826, 4211377, 0916455[illegible] and 4237360 or log on to www.Golden-Treasureskills.

Sunday BIZ

Entrepreneur turns from candles, candies to 'healing drink'

IGCO Natural Colostrum Skim Milk

By Sharon Rosa-Mazarella

FOR MORE than a decade, Elizabeth G. Seira had managed different businesses ranging from aromatherapy things to candles.

Recently she lends the company, that imports and distributes the country's first colostrum-based food.

Seira started as an entrepreneur in the '90s, selling aromatherapy products in her store Hegenesis, a chain of wellness products shop, initially located in the Robo Plaza Shangri-La Mall.

"I was the one who introduced aromatherapy in the Philippines," Seira declares, citing products such as aromatherapy candles that are readily available in the country back then.

She adds that most of these products were sourced abroad, and becomes a fad to many local patrons.

"I have a niche market here. And customers really appreciate it because they don't need to go abroad to buy it. It may be a bit pricey but many of our clients are thankful that it's available here," Seira shares.

Regrouped has had many branches in its trading malls in Metro Manila, including one branch each a spa in Boulevard. Although she admits no longer exist today, Seira relates how it had been a success: "It was very good.... because I was the only one who had those products. I have a niche market. When I go abroad and see one-of-a- kind things I buy products and put them in my store....and customers love it."

She also ventured in a Candy Express franchise located near the then "Ripley's Believe It or Not" museum in the Shangri-La Mall, taking advantage of the many customers visiting the museum. However, when "Ripley's" ceased operations, Seira decided to close Candy Express as the mall's lease on moving it to another location.

But her penchant for wellness products prodded her, together with a Malaysian business partner, to put up IGI Philippines Inc. in 2008. IGI Philippines started its operations in 2009 and soon became one of the country's leading health products in many parts of the country. Its mother company is the Malaysia-based IGI World.

Seira recalls how she wasn't too keen at the idea of the women in the beginning, but after learning the many health benefits the product contains, her hesitations turned

ELIZABETH G. Seira

to enthusiasm.

IGI's main product today is the IgCo Natural Colostrum Skim Milk, a healthy food and drink made from bovine colostrum imported from New Zealand.

Antibodies

Colostrum is the pre-milk substance produced during the first few days after the birth of a human or an animal. It contains large amounts of antibodies or immunoglobulins (Ig), as well as vitamins and minerals that help protect newborns from viruses and bacteria.

"It is the only food in nature that contains antibodies," says Seira, IGI Philippines' managing director.

Studies show that colostrum has great benefits not only to newborns but to adults as well. And researchers prove that bovine colostrum has nearly similar properties as that of human colostrum, thus it's a good alternative source for commercial consumption.

IgCo (Immunoglobulin Colostrum) is 100 percent natural colostrum blended with skim milk to powder form, made using a slow freeze-drying technique. This process preserves colostrum's active biological components such as the immune and growth factors.

"It is safe and it's all natural because the cows in New Zealand are pasture fed, no injection, zero," explains Seira.

She says the their target market is "everybody...sick or not sick, young or old," adding that it's a preventive agent that promotes the immune system to order to prevent getting sick, and to others even fix those with lactose intolerance as it has a very low lactose content.

IgCo's 15g-sachet retails for P75. Seira stresses that it is recommended to be taken on an empty stomach early in the morning or before bedtime and must be dissolved only in lukewarm or cold water, not hot water.

From 300 distributors in the first month of its operation, SHE has now 3,000 distributors all over the country.

'The miracle food'

Seira adds that many doctors and medical practitioners, who call the product "The Miracle Food," vouch for IgCo's many health benefits, that's why they recommend it to their patients.

In fact, at SHE's website (www.mybestlife.com.ph), there are many testimonies by IgCo users relating how the product made them healthy and well, including a 17-year-old girl who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma in 2008 who declared how IgCo protected her from getting opportunistic infections while undergoing chemotherapy treatments.

Other health benefits of colostrum aside from boosting the immune system are: it helps lower blood sugar to normal level; maintains strong bones and a healthy intestinal tract; helps build muscles; minimizes allergies; and helps heal wounds faster, among others.

But SHE is not only about making profits. Seira stresses their advocacy of helping out and giving back in the communities through the company's SHE Care program which conducts outreach programs all over the country by conducting feeding programs and medical missions. They also give out IgCo samples to poor communities and, with the help of doctors, educate people about the benefits of colostrum. SHE also sponsors and participates in several medical conventions and symposia.

SHE Academy, on the other hand, is the company's training program for its members and interested participants, who want to become a member or distributor, which teaches basic communication and presentation skills, as well as personality development and spiritual wellness.

Seira is optimistic that SHE will go a long way in helping Filipinos become healthy, as well as giving them opportunities to earn. "Sabi nga namin, basi nasisiyahan," she beams, adding that many volunteers-based producers are being developed by the company.

She concludes by assuring that aside from the success of the business, nothing makes her happier and fulfilled than helping others and seeing them happy, healthy and well.

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UCI brings premium quality buses

Mock business as rehearsal for the future

By Elizabeth Lalanga
Contributor

GESTURE Erika Kaw and Shaerazade Yap of St. Jude Catholic School in Manila with their product.

HEAVY WORDS playing pretend comes cleaner as the viral thing. Three teams of high school students who represented the country at the recent Philippine Business Administration 2010 International Trade Challenge in Singapore got a chance to reinforce their self-confidence and ability to do teamwork as they worked on their unique business ideas.

One all-girl team came home with the Oktoberfest trophy in the regional finals.

Genevieve Erika Kaw and Shaerazade Yap of St. Jude Catholic School in Manila placed third in a field of 25 other teams from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand because of Mura, their brand of glasses.Kaw famous Rose that inspire the American and the Filipino markets.

They believe that there is great potential in Mura because according to their research, many Americans and Europeans are sensitive to glares, which is found in Rose.

She and Yap decided to use bamboo as their main ingredient because it is abundance in the Philippines.

"There's so much of it here. We overproduce it so the owner that it is used already as animal feed. So why not do another thing with it for business?" Kaw says.

They assessed business, probed them, soaked them in water and salt to keep them from turning brown, sliced them into chip sizes, sun-dried the chips, then ground them into powder. Yap's mother tested it by baking cupcakes, cookies and bonbon cake.

Meanwhile, Hyzon Lim and his faster School partner Sherin Yu came up with Sweet Ice, inspired by the Asia fruits.

They plan to target Singapore because you can't find the taste of halo-halo there. When people buy Sweet Ice, they get to remember about the country. It's the taste of homesickness," Lim says, adding that their tagline is "Tastes as halo-halo."

Simone Lessang and Janelle Ong of CIS Montessori in Greenhills, also in San Juan City, likewise found the Asian market large enough to accommodate a new product—organic beverage that tastes like coffee with none of caffeine's side effects.

Apple Coffee's target market is Hong Kong where apples are bountiful and people are generally "health-conscious."

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

The house that fried chicken built is redesigned for the 21st century

Budji and Royal contemporize a Filipino institution

ELEMENTS reminiscent of Max's are incorporated in a contemporary wood-and-glass cabin, colorful detail in a picture wall.

BUDJI + ROYAL has taken Max's signature color—red—as unifying detail. The color is on the steel-based outdoor sign to give the façade a monumental feel, while indoors, the great red wall is focal point.

BOOTH seating has been redesigned to complement Max's new look.

By Joseph O. Cortez
Contributor

WHEN MAX'S Restaurant opens its first franchise in Sydney, Australia, soon it will bring to the Land Down Under its signature fried chicken recipe that has appealed to the Pinoy taste for last 65 years.

And—it will also bring a design aesthetic that is uniquely Filipino—that of the design team of Budji Layug and Royal Pineda.

The pair has in three years, Max's has been slowly updating its look to reflect the more sophisticated tastes of Filipinos. Not more than 50 years, it has been a family-style restaurant—the venue of countless family gatherings, from wedding receptions to baptisms. The look has always taken a back seat to the food and service, which, to many, is as every restaurant should be.

Long before Max's celebrated its 65th anniversary, it tapped the Budji + Royal design team to contemporize its look.

Architect Pineda says they decided at the onset that the look of Max's should not distract from the finely-honed culinary standards the restaurant chain is known for. Rather, the new look should make diners see the restaurant as more than just a family gathering place.

"When they came to us, I really felt they needed a new premise," says Pineda, president and CEO of Budji + Royal. "It was no longer stimulating. It was not exciting. The brand was good in terms of its fried chicken, which is why it survived all those years. I just felt it needed a new generation look—not just the look, but also the spirit that will really go all the way to the people who serve the food."

Budji + Royal was recommended to Max's by Arlene Salud, part-owner of Max's.

Piecemeal approach

Max's took a piecemeal approach to the renovation, always in consultation with Budji + Royal on how to best implement their design based on the budget they have. To date, more than 100 branches nationwide have been renovated following the new design.

Max's was born in 1945 when Maximo Gimenez, a Stanford-educated teacher, befriended and entertained American soldiers posted in Quezon City. The soldiers would often knock on the doors of residences to the area looking for food.

One time, when the soldiers knocked on Gimenez's door on Sct. Tuazon St., they brought some chicken that they asked to be cooked. Gimenez's sister Simay Ruby cooked it so well that the soldiers kept coming back for more.

It was that same fried chicken recipe that Max's has been using the past 65 years.

Gimenez's Sct. Tuazon home is the flagship Max's branch, and yes it is the last restaurant to be renovated.

Pineda says that slowly introducing the new look nationwide is a sort of "strategic renovation."

Each branch was approached as a singular project with its own budget constraints. The design ripples down from the flagship branch— although in this case, the design ripples back to Quezon City.

Signature color

One thing that Budji + Royal has adopted from the old Max's look is the restaurant's signature color—red. The color is used on the walls to unify the look. In stand-alone branches, the red wall makes its appearance in the outdoor signage. In, say, the Greenhills branch, the red wall becomes the focal point. In branches inside malls, the red wall becomes the focus of the décor.

For a more modern look, Max's trademark brick tile look has been dropped for gray lahar bricks. Pineda says the color of lahar bricks is cool to the eye, as opposed to red bricks. The bricks are also laid out in a grid rather than the usual stretcher pattern, to give it a modern look.

In all Max's branches, an open plan is used in contrast one part of the restaurant to the other. Pineda says this design brings in as much natural light as possible, particularly in stand-alone branches, and where possible, maximizes the surrounding view of the restaurant.

At the Max's Roxas Boulevard branch in Malate, Manila, all the windows are oriented toward nearby Manila Bay. All seats in the restaurant have a view of the sea, which is unique in the business.

In the Tagaytay branch, the sight line is oriented toward a view of Taal Lake and its volcano. This way, each branch becomes a destination in itself, beyond the offering of fried chicken.

To stand-alone restaurants, the outdoor dining area was reconfigured to have a more tropical feel. Instead of solid roofing, a trellis was installed for outdoors. As dining areas, the trellis is covered with clear roofing to let in natural lighting and to give shade on a hot day.

The outdoor seats are also oriented toward the nature view in the area; in Malate, the outdoor seating looks out to Rajah Sulayman Plaza and Manila Bay.

The wide open glass windows help the restaurants save on electricity by bringing in natural light from the outdoors. During sunny days, lighting can be switched off to roughly 50 areas.

Display stars

The Max's branch in Makati, Manila, along Buendia Boulevard is the chain's display store. It is now the most thought-out branch in terms of the design crafted by Budji + Royal. However, when renovation is completed in the Sct. Tuazon branch, it will carry the most complete interpretation of the new look.

Pineda adds that the new look of Max's restaurants nationwide extends to its corporate office, though in less detailed treatment. There, are no big picture walls here; instead, the basic themes, colors and plan are carried out in the Max's offices.

Max's Restaurant has desired for more than half a century with its family-style look from the '50s intact. Will the new look of Max's be able to last just as long?

Pineda points out that while design should be timeless, it should also evolve with the lifestyles of people who use the space.

"The key to make it timeless," says Pineda. "We don't want our design to be dated. We like it to be felt like it was done only yesterday. That was a very challenging goal. This design is ready for improvements. It is ready for another step, it is ready for an add-on soon, whatever will reinforce its idea and character."

THE OUTDOOR dining area has been redesigned to create a more tropical feel. An arbor that has been covered with clear roofing lets in light and offers shade.

PICTURE wall presents a capsule history of Max's continuing elements, prominent features from its past, like the name and photographs of old branches.

LEANER bricks laid out in a grid and the great red wall incorporating some of Max's pictorial history

LAHAR bricks laid out in a grid and the great red wall incorporating some of Max's pictorial history

Vintage and designer furniture, paintings from Lagdameo collection in auction

"SANTIAGO" chairs/stools, fabric-upholstered stainless steel legs, by Percival Lafuente for Manreza

"YELLOW" Selig chairs

VINTAGE AND designer furniture, paintings from the Lagdameo collection and Aino Jacobsen "bat" chairs reinterpreted by Filipino artists will be the centerpiece of the Thirtieth Home + Modern Investment sale at Salcedo Auctions. Salcedo Auctions Gallery, one of the oldest auction houses in the country specializing in antiques, fine art and investment, is open by Sept. 25, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., at Ninth Room of Mandarin Oriental Manila.

The sale will consist of Philippine and continental furniture, décor and objects of curio from the turn of the 20th century to the present.

There will also be paintings from the estate of Benjamin and Elena Lagdameo, inherited from Don Salvador Lagdameo, treasurer of the Philippines from 1927-1936.

These paintings are: "Portrait of a Boy Scout," an important 1937 watercolor done in Rome by National Artist Victorio C. Edades, a friend of the family through Elena Lagdameo Reyes, who was also an ABAC "Music" scene with Sampaloc Tree," a classic 1934 oil on canvas painted by Fabian de la Rosa; and "Rubber Plantation Scene," a rare oil on wood by Pablo Amorsolo dated 1928.

"CHRISTY," by Ronald Ventura

Other pieces typifying the Amorsolo home include a horse-hitched kalayong scene; a solid modern San Miguel cattle from Bohol; a mesa altar in nacre and incense with hipped details; a watercolor by Pablo Sescon-Avecilla; a pair of outstanding oval-shaped colonial icons on wood; Renaissance revival tall pieces; Rococo, Lalique and Waterford crystal; Limoges porcelain pieces; and Dan Isaac chairs by Synergy, Royal Cronic Derby and Wedgwood.

Given a compelling design, modern and contemporary pieces validate the living space of the discerning collector. Highlights include an award winning Patricia Esquivel "Antibodi" chairs lounge for Manreza, Florence Knoll and Jolly lounge chairs; a Thonet side chair in mint conditions; and three Scan Jacobsen "Bat" chairs especially reinterpreted by leading contemporary Filipino visual artists Patricia Esquivel, Nikki Lerma and Ronald Ventura.

There are matched by large scale ink wash paintings by Gigi Dimalo; an exceptional pen and ink study of Victorio Edades's "Pilo ng Bigas"; an uncommon Botong print; and an iconic oil on canvas by Ang Kiukok.

Preview is ongoing at Salcedo Auctions, G/F, Three Salcedo Place, 121 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City until Sept. 24, 10a.m.-6p.m.

Bidders are expected to attend the preview as the lots will not be exhibited at the auction.

Catalogue is available online at www.salcedoauctions.com. For more information, call (632) 9648096-9364888 or e-mail info@salcedoauctions.com.

Ballet Manila's exciting adolescence

By Tan Bejasen Planahan
Court Dancer

MY IMPRESSION of Ballet Manila has always been that of a hub of budding dancers just so happy to be dancing, and although I am aware of the transitions running put forth by its artistic director, Lea Macuja, it will be unfair to pass judgment on the company's performances every time the same faces line up in heavy duty pose. This is one to say that the company came in lightweight performances, because they don't, given the paraanovers they work with.

Ballet Manila is nurturing dancers on their way to full potential. That was quite evident in the 15th anniversary repeat gala entitled "Stairs Halo to Aura," held Aug. 20 at Star Theater, where most of the members exuded sheer dancing pleasure.

Opening with Act II of "La Bayadere," the set more popularly known as "The Kingdom of the Shades," was a choice suit. It is a classic of the classics.

Perhaps alongside "Swan Lake" and "Giselle," this ballet's "white section," for me, ranks the most. Restricted, "La Bayadere" remained unknown in the West until 1961, when Rudolph Nureyev, following his defection to the West, mounted Act II for the Royal Ballet. Henceforth, it was performed solely as an independent piece.

It was only in the '80s that the entire ballet was reconstructed for the American Ballet Theater by Russian ballerina Natalia Makarova, during the rule of Nikita.

The full-length ballet, however, does not add any more to the already mesmerizing Act II, considered one of the most celebrated excerpts in all classical ballets. In every it is one's lifetime one gets to see just Act II, it should suffice.

Even Hollywood took note of this set, making it the most photogenic and dramatic scene in the movie, "The Turning Point."

Hypnotic

And denies it inside, as the Ballet Manila members made their hypnotic entrance one by one, arabesque tendu port de bras, in a straight two-plus-three, in single-syringe. As the first dancer in line, it is an "arabesque to death" sort of manner. Luckily, most of the female dancers of Ballet Manila are more or less of the same height, similar limbs and consistently rather tender looking, except for Ms Sue Ramos who is "Sweeter."

The repetitive, almost meditative movement allows the eye to observe each dancer, then eventually zoom out to the whole scene to survey the uniformity of movement, and happily, the 19 member corps de ballet succeeds in this theatrical precision.

Apart from the principal dancers, I have always held a great fondness for the corps, sometimes more than the soloists, particularly in the "white section." The poses, moves, steps, which would look awkward if done alone, really look good when done en masse, en blanc, in unison.

This is the magic of the corps, and Ballet Manila has a GREAT one that would rather the corps is conserved.

Close lines

The entrance of Nikiya, danced by Mylene Aquilino, eight swan sets her apart with her masterful classic lines and footstiff lends. Although there is a "lowered" short her, her potential as an étoile is remarkable. There is musicality in her phrasing and a definite ease when she hits the seconds.

The notable with "white sections," which, more often than not, takes the spectator to other worlds, is the characterization of how an otherworldly creature is to dance. Does she dance in her "free" persona in the perfect arm? Or does she, with her glorified body take on a new personality dimension?

Like "Swan Lake" and "Giselle," the lyrics is in the realm of the dead, or be-wished. Her male partner is the only living creature.

Technique-wise, Ms Aquilino is delightful in her sustained pointe work and sequence movements, though she does need to flesh out more the persona of a deceased betrayed lover who now doubts the intentions of a live man who belongs to a higher caste.

Perhaps the resemblance of character will come in time, it is to be so and about remaining and image improvement. Aquilino is off to a great start.

As Solor, Rino Enriquez gave a strong and impressive performances.

'Swan Lake'

"Swan Lake," as the I thought was of an excellent dance, is, in truth, an amalgam of the names of the dancers on whom the piece was choreographed: Lisa (Macuja) and Rudy (de Dios).

Choreographer Augusto Damian III danced two Tchaikovsky's popular score made popular by George Balanchine in his off-danced opus loosely referred to in the ballet world as "Tchai Pas," short for Tchaikovsky's pas de deux.

The piece, which belonged in the original suite of "Swan Lake," was intended for the Act III pas de deux. Because it was not published with the rest of the score, it remained unnoticed for years until it was unearthed in the composer's archives and used by Balanchine in 1960, simply entitling the work "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux." Balanchine's neo-classic choreographic style imaginably fit right into the quick tempo.

When Macuja asked Damian to choreograph a piece on the music of What Dee, I would have imagined any other choreographer balking at the request.

Ms Macuja has remained ever faithful and loyal to the rigors of her Russian classical training

Damian, who has heavy neo-classical training, also danced Balanchine's choreography from 1992-1994 while in Germany. It would have been either a plus or a massive stumbling block, given the great temptation to copy or even give in to "muscle memory," a kind of Pavlovian conditioning of the dancing body to react accordingly upon hearing a familiar tune.

Damian, nevertheless, dared take the challenge and came up with his own inspired version, which was a clever departure from the master's work.

He also suggested costumes which were similar the second pas de deux pink tutu to a deep maroon velvet set ensemble.

Balanchine

Although one sees hints of a "Balanchinian" influence, like using dress characters steps (like the hand-on-head jump used in Balanchine's "Tarantella"), Damian's version proves that where the music is concerned, one can't have enough of a good thing. The tall order is to choreograph a piece as per with the music.

The speed of the footwork, which is almost prodigious at times, the little hop steps and hand flutly, typical of Balanchine's brand of neo-classicism, are subtly present in Damian's work.

But, then again, these moves are intrinsic in Damian's second skin as a dancer. In, as a choreographer he happily (for the spectator) does not stray far while building his own.

While Macuja's footwork could have been more precise and de Dios's finishes cleaner, the pieces was nevertheless an affirmation to Damian's growing repertoire.

In contrast, the traditional-world premiere, Bordan Ovenmore by visiting Russian choreographer Sergey Filatov, was... typically Russian.

Steeped in tradition of the "old school" from the classical steps to the costumes, the piece reminded us that Ms Macuja has remained ever faithful and loyal to the rigors of her Russian classical training which she herself spreads of in the years breaks, during the performance: that once you are trained in the classics, you can do anything. Filatov called at home.

Finally, Ballet Manila's is a joyful take on the martial art. I am particularly charmed by a nouvelle dance interpretation provided that it is injected with dance wit. An all-male ensemble also always raises the anecdotes.

Male dancers

It is to please like those that Ballet Manila is able to show off its bigger than usual number of male dancers.

After the celebratory finale "Simpatia," an OPM suite by Gerardo Francisco depicting signature of Manila life, Manila, as romantic call, the company is to present to the audience who joined her in forming Ballet Manila. In 15 years ago: dance partner and artistic director/Ballet Master Dona Barrera, Lance Damian, Melanie Mesa, Ellie Christine Guzman, Pamela Aspen Espejo, Aileen Gutierrez, Jeffrey Espeo, Eduardo Espejo Jr., Marcus Talusan and Eileen Lagera.

To each she gave a single rose, then proceeded in the audience to give roses to her two Russian mentors, Tatiana Udalenkova and Sergey Vikulov, and her own supporter husband, Fred Elizalde.

This "reverence" Bong, the ballet was of acknowledgement, is such a tender, humble and noble gesture. And in her generosity, Lea Macuja never forgets this.

Adventures in toy shopping, A-List style

By Pam Pastor

I AM officially an adult, I have been one for over a decade (at least that's what my passport tells me) but there are just some things I haven't outgrown.

Cotton candy, cartoons, comic books, lollipops, my dogged fan pickles, my love for toys. Yes, toys.

Like any other kid, I had my favorite toys. I had an unhealthy Barbie obsession. Whenever I disappeared in the mall (and it was often), my family always knew where to find me – at the Barbie display, gaping at the blonde queen of plastic. My brother and I spent a considerable amount of time throwing pool parties for my Barbies and Batman and Robin in my Barbie pool. I loved Polly Pocket and My Littlest Pet Shop box but because I had a brother, I didn't just stick to things pink and girly. I loved my Ghostbusters and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles action figures. The Silkie and Chock looked into my world, probably because they always groomed adults out. My brother and I also cherished our Wrestlemania toys – his he's was Hulk Hogan, mine was Ultimate Warrior.

I wish we had kept those toys. I miss my eye-popping PeterIronbreaker and the sexy Frozzle with their knee-high boots and their sparkling capes – I've actually gone on Ebay to look for them.

Ayala Malls gave me the ultimate toy store experience by handing me a magical Ayala Malls eGC

Ultimate

I am almost 30 years old but I still like spending time in toy stores, even when I don't have kids in tow. I explore the aisles, researching Polly Pocket's growth spurt, checking out the latest Pixel Chix and wondering why they didn't create the Wii when I was a kid. I love toy stores. There is something about being surrounded by fun, colorful things that makes me forget I'm an adult with responsibilities – even for just a few minutes.

Ayala Malls gave me the ultimate toy store experience by handing me an Ayala Malls Electronic Gift Certificate and telling me to go crazy – at least as crazy as P19,000 would allow me to.

If you told me when I was a kid that there was a magical card that you can flash in toy stores to get practically any toy you wanted, I wouldn't have believed you. But that's exactly what the Ayala Malls eGC is to – it's magic.

And it's not just me – your toy can go crazy with the Ayala Malls A-List Wishlist.

Ayala Malls has once again launched Ayala Malls A-List Wishlist Promo – but this time, it's even bigger.

The mechanics are simple – a minimum purchase of P500 at Bonifacio Stopstreet, Alabang Town Center, Ayala Center Cebu, Market! Market!, Trinoma, Northtwin High Street and MarQuee Mall will earn you a raffle coupon, allowing you to choose from 12 A-List experiences – "The Tasty Experience," "Everyday's a Friday," "Read Up With A Coffee Cup," "I Love Me," "All Time Playtime" "Gadgets Galore," "Stay Fashion Forward," "Supermarket Super Saver," "More Finds For Less," "Get Fit and Fab," "Home Is Where My Heart Is" and "Perk Up Your Style." Each month (at five months), eighty lucky winners (ten from each mall) will get to choose from these experiences. Visit Ayala Malls isn't just giving away A-List experiences. Four lucky Ayala Malls shoppers who join the A-List Promo will also get the chance win four grand prizes – Alvaro's the Lynda Condo studio haus unit, Jaguar X-Type 2.0, a set of Jaeminet South Sea Pearls, and a trip for two to Paris via EL&B. This promo will run until October 31, 2010.

My A-List experience

Because shopping experiences are more fun when shared, I recruited two fab shopper's – adults who, like me, have yet to let go of their love for toys. One friend has a penchant for everything cute, pink and Hello Kitty while my other friend has formed a strong bond with her PSP and regularly plays board games with grade school kids.

We headed to Glorietta and its version of one crazy day, hitting Kiss Station, Rustan's Makati's toy section and Hobbes and Landes. There we flashed the all-powerful Ayala Malls eGCs.

It was an intense shopping session, one rife with action and adventure. It was so intense that I gave myself two injuries – one, a paper cut courtesy of Liza Frank and two, a painful throbbing on my toe because I dropped a board game on it.

But the injuries were well worth it. After shopping, we headed for Outback in Glorietta where we collapsed in a booth, surrounded by bags and bags of toys.

And there, as we were waiting for our chicken wings and burgers to arrive, we ripped open packs of Mighty Beanz that we called "Cloth" we exclaimed in unison as we saw that one pack included the Princess and Unicorn Beanz that we had been searching for.

Mighty Beanz were just the beginning.

The loot

We picked out an adorable lamb from Plains that will make a sweet little poodle very happy. We also chose a SkyBall, a complete set of die-cast Cobo trucks and two functional sets – pizza and sushi. And because we went to find and it was still here movies, we picked out a sparkly purple hula hoop that, sadly, no one has managed to use successfully yet.

The Eno Stackers a different story – it's already been played a lot of times. The ball poppers, which were an affordable find at Kidz Station (only P79.75!), are good fun – we should know, we played with it inside a humongous skydome while packing up after a shoot. We also picked up a Toy Story 3 talking Jessie doll. But the best find for me is the Nickelodeon Super Slimer, which promises to shoot slime as far as 25 feet, and the bucket of slime.

The next time kids come after me with their liter guns, I will be ready. They will be slimed.

Our finds were fantastic, but my A-List Wishlist experience gave me something bigger. The toys are great, sure, but what's even more precious were the hours my friends and I spent happily raiding some of our favorite toy stores, completely enjoying ourselves and feeling like kids again.

Not a fan of toys?

If you are one of the lucky winners of Ayala Malls A-List Wishlist Promo, you get P19,000 worth of eGCs to spend on any of 12 different A-List Experiences. Not into toys? Not to dad. You have other experiences to choose from.

'The Tasty Experience'
Dine to your heart's content at any Ayala Malls restaurant.

'Everyday's a Friday'
Round up your friends and head to any Ayala Malls bar and unwind.

Don't worry, Ayala Malls has AN A-List Wish List experience that will rock your world

'Read Up With A Coffee Cup'
Make your librarian proud – stock up on the best-sellers at Ayala Malls bookstores and enjoy your new books with a good cup of coffee from Ayala Malls coffee shops.

'I Love Me'
Give yourself the pampering you deserve – enjoy spa and beauty services from Ayala Malls beauty salons, spas and down clinics.

'Gadgets Galore'
Head over to your favorite Ayala Malls electronics and accessories stores all your gadget-needs.

'Stay Fashion Forward'
Need a wardrobe update? The boutiques and department stores of Ayala Malls give you endless choices.

'Supermarket Super Saver'
Stock up on groceries at your favorite Ayala Malls supermarket.

'More Finds For Less'
Love bargains? Visit the different Ayala Malls they're all treasure troves for good deals.

'Get Fit and Fab'
Visit Ayala Malls sporting goods stores and get the tools you need for staying in shape.

'Home Is Where My Heart Is'
Go to Ayala Malls specialty home shops and appliance stores and give your home a makeover.

'Perk Up Your Style'
Addicted to shoes? You can spend your eGCs on footwear, bags and other leather goods.

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

Teng's not-so-lonely planet

A leading hairstylist has an incredible wanderlust. From the ruins of the Incas to Mt. Etna, he has collected stories—and friends along the way

By Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor

IF THERE is anything Vicente "Teng" Rama wants in life, it is freedom—whether from harum-drum work or from a dumbing-down environment of Metro Manila. So every year, there are huge dents in his calendar devoted to satisfying his wanderlust.

As a visceral and visual person, he enjoys those high points in his travels in images captured of sounds.

There are snapshots of Rama posing by the Zeus fount palace, running toward a field of tulips, mooning skirtboards in Berlin, watching the waves on the lake at Hyde Park...smelling the fragrant cherry blossoms

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Teng's not-so-lonely planet

From page D1

in Hamburg, or exploring the castles in Scotland.

There's also Roma remembering the history in the ruins in Naples, enjoying the seaside view from the cliffs of Sardinia, taking in the lively atmosphere of the Cathedral of St. John in Malta, watching the flamenco at the museo bullerio in las Palmas Roma, or being in awe of the intricacy of the Alhambra palace.

There there's also Roma seen whetted by the sight and aroma of long shower sticks, coffee, antipasto salad and palamino in Cadiz.

Roma worked as media liaison for a big ad agency and wound up doing hair and makeup for commercial shoots. His buddy (operative cannot hairdresser) Bernardo Aparo, told him to do something more creative than a 9-to-5 job. The beauty business seemed more lucrative.

Roma then took basic haircutting courses at Shen's. To hone his skills, he was trained by David Charlton and Stephen Brodie, who had just arrived from London. In the Philippines, these experts pioneered in setting a formal, international standard training program in cutting and coloring techniques.

Eventually Roma joined three at Manchette Hotel. It was his fruitful career as hairdresser that brought him around the world.

In 1980, he went to HK as one of the country's representatives to a hair show.

That was the start of his world-hopping life.

His first adventure trip was a three-month tour of Australia in 1985. It was easy to get a visa, then if one bought a ticket from Qantas. When he knew friend, designer Rainer Mattes, was invited to hold a fashion show in Papua New Guinea, Roma tagged along as hair and makeup artist.

He was fascinated by the customs of the tribal cultures thriving in a well-planned city development. Chef took in 6-carriage and drawing hotel sat, the 100ish walked around the avenues as if they were in a forest.

Two for the road

On New Year's Day in 1992, Roma embarked on a journey that would be the most eventful in his life. It was a cross-country cruise on an 82-passenger luxury liner that was on an inaugural voyage. Roma worked in the hair salon.

While cruising the English Channel, he met a 20-year-old German named Torben Dunkel, the son of the then president of Bank of Hamburg. United was his roommate and travel buddy.

Dunkel once said that he got more pay. The girl was puzzled. "Are you running guy, too?" He laughed, knowing fully that they were just buddies.

When the ship docked, they explored the city, returning to the ship just in time.

It was Roma's first time to see Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa, where he explored the ruins, temples and ancient civilizations, and art galleries and museums. The trip was indeed eventful, especially as he met interesting, authors, chefs, lecturers and all kinds of professionals who opened his mind to new possibilities.

During a stopover in Seville, they went to the Equestrian and bumped into Sahid and his love of models. Dunkel was smitten, particularly by Thin Arabia.

They traveled to Gibraltar, the Mediterranean, Malta and Greece. After three months, at cruise's end, they said a tearful goodbye to each other. Dunkel found Roma the perfect traveling companion as he was like a father to him.

Left behind

During a stopover in Rome, Roma took a leisurely stroll. He stayed St. Peter's Basilica, the Ruins, and chanced upon a shoe sold to buy three pairs of shoes and belts. When he went in the train station to return to the port, he noticed that the train wasn't moving on schedule. He couldn't understand the announcement in Italian. An English-woman translated, saying that there was an engine problem. Passengers had to alight to take the next train.

"My heart was jumping out of my chest," he recalled.

He knew he'd miss the 7:30 p.m. departure of the ship. By the time he reached port, the ship had already left. His heart sank. Luckily the port staff sent a radio message to the ship and Roma took a boat next to guide huge sea vessels.

The ship was already way out in the sea. The deck hands lowered a rope ladder as the ship moved. Roma rushed in his dripping flesh in his pockets and along his camera around his neck, then clambered on board, to cheering passengers.

The captain slapped him on his butt and chided him. "The ship is not a taxi that you can hail in the middle of the sea." The officer then broke into a smile and told the wayward passenger to take his dinner.

Filipinos and their stories

Roma owns great deal of standing on the deck, seeing lingers on the infinite changes of patterns on the water's surface as the light cast its glow and the shades shifted. He loved the excitement of waking up to a different port, and seeing a new country.

He has been through a heaven as the ship crossed the channel, penetrating a thick blanket of fog. He marveled at man's ingenuity at building the locks, and the resplendent beauty of ravines and waterfalls surrounded by teak.

He visited the ruins of the Incas, Costa Rica, Galapagos and Mexico, watched the sanctuary of animals in Panama canal, and the shades of sunlight the dyeing through the windows of the Sistine chapel in the Cruise of America.

In Shetland while waiting in the pier, Roma met a homely 16-year with two beautiful Russian daughters. Their Irish father went ugly man's because his face, body and hands had been badly burned. He asked the Filipino how she ended up in a remote place, she replied that she was a mail order bride.

After nine months, Roma was back to work in Makati, with a lot of places he sailed home away from home.

"I explained the world and went got positive it," he says.

Kind strangers

Over the years, Roma's travels have been spontaneous celebration of living. He liked adventure such as visiting Apen's Bank, the Barrier Reef and Fraser Island, one of the biggest islands in the world, and nearing Mount Vesuvius in Naples, walking around the craters in Mt. Titus where volcanic lava is actively flowing.

In 1997 he flew to New Zealand, the Land of the White Clouds, joined a camp, climbed glaciers and explored crevices. "People think I'm not the type," says Roma.

He did hang gliding and flew his way through the cloud-covered mountains. At the camp, the men chopped vegetables while the women cooked. At night, the group of 15 would sing while barbecuing the beefings and melting the marshmallows by the fire, or hold a beer shower.

Roma once did a nine-country tour of America via Amtrak, covering Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and Florida.

On one of his trips, he met a Filipina businesswoman who talked about reclaiming her life. She and her husband had migrated to the US but due to a bad investment, they ran into debt. The husband suddenly left ill. They earnings were spent on his medical bills. He eventually died.

The widow, not used to holding a job, had no choice but to work as caregiver for an elderly woman. The point was soon formed into compassion for her employer. When the older woman died, she willed her all her estate and a generous inheritance. That was a striking story of the reversal of fortune.

Roma covers the kindness of strangers on his trips. In 1998, still new to the subway scene in Manhattan, he ended up in Harlem. A lady from the subway assured him he was fine, she alighted from the train and showed him where to get a token to his destination.

Two years later Roma spent the new millennium evening for six hours in Times Square waiting for the New Year revelry. The celebration was short as people were spilling out and said the night due to a bomb threat.

Cheap travel in Asia

Over the years, Roma has collected friendships with many countries who have returned home to travels such as Cambodia to watch the sunrise at Angkor Wat, Cost-conscious, Roma preferred to stay in a small hotel. His client would have him booked in a car and explore the jungles.

In Indonesia he traveled with his staffer Geoff Moran.

"Geoff is a good traveling companion. He never complains and he's very open-minded. However, as we walked around Bali, people would ask if he wants a name or a services. He was a big hit in the dark. Because he was so honest. Jul, we were placing," he says.

In Vietnam, another friend treated him to a culinary tour, trying out the best restaurants. At the end of the trip, Roma had a good problem.

That same year, Roma received a newspaper ad about bargain fares to Nepal, which on him was twin footprints. To mark his 50th birthday he wanted to treat himself to a new adventure.

When he arrived in the Kathmandu airport, he was greeted by dust and animals. It was even more disturbing to be surrounded by real vultures, hungry for tourist dollars. He had booked a cab driver who drove him calmly to the hotel.

In bargain row, he found an inn which resisted like an oasis amid the squalor. He soon found a garden and terrace and offered free breakfast.

For two weeks, he went around the chaotic city, passing the two-day Asian Roma circuit tour which followed a bike trail. While cruising along the main motorway, he saw how the city's life revolved around the river, as a place for cleansing, religious rights, washing and disposing the dead after cremation.

Roma's backpack now included an eight-hour bike, camping in the wilds, surrounded by mountains, snowcapped peaks and walls of azaleas in full bloom. In some walks, the cleaning of the monks from a distance or the chanting of the sheep became a background of music. He took precaution against the crocodiles on the river, which were reported safe.

At night, he would sleep in a an inn where the amenities were spartan but the views plentiful.

His camp gear consisted of winter shoes with a good sole grip, three pairs of socks and five pairs of underwear. Insect repellent, a cap, sunscreen and a travel insurance. Meals consisted of baked goods from the inn. Simple pleasures, he says.

"Traveling is visually, emotionally and spiritually rewarding. You become keen aware of the variations in culture and sensitive to people's existence. It creates tolerance, understanding and compassion.

"Whenever you go to a strange place, you end up making friends and be cared for by God's creations. Travel makes you learn to love this planet. Since we happen to be here, we have to preserve it."

EXHAUSTED in Nepal

COLD BUT happy in New Zealand

WITH new friends in Chiang Mai

Shopping in Hong Kong

Banco De Oro extends to its Visa/MasterCard and Platinum Credit Cardholders its newest promo called Great Deals, Hong Kong Style. This promo, which started last July 1 and ends until the end of the year, gives BDO Elite cardholders discounts in over 50 establishments in the island shopping paradise. In fact, some of the highlights in the said promo includes among many others: 10 percent discount in Mongo up to 15 percent offer jewelry bought from Prudential Jewelry as well as at Glenn & Premier Jewellery and Watch. Free hotel accommodations are offered at half the price (50 percent off) if visitors book themselves at Royal Plaza Hotel, Grand Stanford Hotel & Hotel is also dishing off 10 percent off its rates especially for BDO Elite cardholders. Aside from Hong Kong, BDO Elite credit cards are also honored in other countries wherever MasterCard and Visa credit cards are accepted. Call 631 0000 or visit www.bdo.com.ph.

Macau's dancing water

THE HOUSE of Dancing Water opens this week in Macau. The new $128 250-million world-class production envisioned by Lawrence Ho, co-chair and chief executive officer of Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd., will be presented at the 2,000-seat Dancing Water Theater in the City of Dreams, an integrated entertainment resort in Macau developed by Melco.

A cast of about 77 international performance artists brings to life "The House of Dancing Water" epic, a spectacular love story

TRAVEL BRIEFS

blossoming time and spent and inspired by the "seven emotions principle" derived from classical Confucian beliefs. Audiences will be taken on a magical journey to an extraordinary kingdom through the seven human

emotions, from the abyss of Sadness and Anger to the heights of Desire and the summit of Joy, between the cliffs of Fear to a glorious revolution where Love triumphs over hate and its vicious lovers.

Created and directed by Franco Dragone, whose unique theatrical creations made him the leading creative force behind Cirque du Soleil in the 1980s through the 1990s, the spectacular show has lone dancing costumes and unique choreography performed entirely underwater.

Tickets for "The House of Dancing Water" are available online at www.cityofdreams-macau.com; www.thehouseofdancingwater.com; www.macau.com; and www.cityline.com; www.ticketek.com. Walk-in tickets are available at City of Dreams guest service counters.

EARN PRIVILEGES WHILE TRAVELLING

Resorts World Manila has partnered with Philippine Airlines to offer members of its Mabuhay Miles the extra mile in membership privileges. Based on their accumulated miles, members will be given special privileges on the following categories: Million Miler, Premier Elite, Elite, and Mabuhay Miles card base. Points may either be used in the gaming facilities or to participating RWM outlets. PAL team member Philippine Airlines country manager Bong Pedroquez, Resorts World Manila assistant vice president of national marketing Marlene Pajarel, PAL senior vice president of marketing Pedro Cruz and assistant vice president of passenger sales Tony Herrera with the PAL staff

A Healthy Dose of Glow

LAYOUT BY JOYCE MARIE MONPONHAUS
ACCOUNT MANAGER NING LAUCON

Ladies by example

By Michelle Valera

Gender roles play a huge part in most societies, particularly in Filipino culture. Women are expected to behave a certain way, and most of these expectations are geared towards the domestic and the domicile. Although women are given complete freedom to do anything they want in modern societies, some of them are still constrained in certain stereotypes that are often hard to get out of.

Illustration by Chesca Cid

Brought by their natural caring and doting nature, a Filipina woman is, first and foremost, motherly. They are brought up to become effortlessly and warm people and take great regard for the people they love. Consequently, most of the products and services in the market that specifically cater to the womenfolk recognize this motherhood role of women and provide an extensive source of comfort and pleasure that highlights their thoughtful and maternal nature.

And then, there are the career-oriented women who seize the world everyday with a healthy dose of charm, wit, and sparkling new shoes to boot. They work hard to be competitive leaders in various industries they are in, but they are also on the breadwinnings of their careers without compromising flair and style. They tend to be more adept multitaskers than their male counterparts, as they can easily juggle the demands of the corporate life and the challenges of being a mother and a wife.

Healthy and vain

In a woman's world, two expensive things are heavily invested on: health and vanity. Sometimes, it's hard to draw the line between these two because they seem to overlap on the moments when a lovely compliment like "Ang ganda mo ngayon, ha!" is received. But nonetheless, women spend more when these two are in the hot seat, since society expects them to maintain certain looks and be healthy enough to take care of their families or to become the trailblazers of their chosen fields.

So whether it's shoe enhancing their looks through the use of cosmetic products, visiting a skincare clinic, or purchasing health supplements or label items out of their bodies, there's always a woman behind the concerns, looking for the best aids towards health and wellness.

Women as frontrunners

More importantly, a woman's leadership abilities have changed the whole competitive landscape of society as it sets a huge difference in the way they handle and supervise business operations and commercial ties.

"A woman is a good leader because she is resourceful and resilient," said Mylene Abiva, one of Go Negosyo's premier entrepreneurship advocates, and President and CEO of FELDA Multimedia Inc. "In a male-dominated working environment, women have our own ways of doing business, which is being professional yet not intimidating," she added. Abiva is no stranger to challenges readily addressed by men, as she helps in bridging the gap between our technology driven neighbors and our country's illiterate rural folk.

"When there is a social impact on what you are doing, then it gives your life greater purpose," Abiva added.

Today, a woman has ceased to be some just a shadow behind every man's success. She now walks in a sun-as-quiet beauty, more sun in the open for the world to see, and ready to face the bigger challenges that women before would easily run away from. It is a tough, tough world but nothing is impossible for ladies with a will and heart of gold.

From leaves to roots

Health buffs are snacking about the benefits of wheatgrass, the chlorophyll-rich powder from young wheat shoots. Aside from word of mouth-active demonstrations, there have been studies, albeit few, made to prove that taking one-quarter dram of wheatgrass is good for the body.

There may be skeptics but they are outnumbered by the believers.

Wheatgrass is most known today in the form of juices. This makes it easier for people to take because it can be mixed just like any ordinary fruit drink. And like the difference fruit drinks, wheatgrass is believed to have contents like amino acids, enzymes and phytochemicals.

Enzymes are believed to be the most important compound because it acts as a "catalyst" to the body. It is an end that the other nutrients "to-exist in synergistic proportions" from a balanced and whole nutrition.

Amy Pho says has been nonetheless curing wheatgrass and books in the juice bucking industry of wheatgrass crop growing with its unique, patented and award-winning tech nology called Indoor Organic Aero ponic Cultivation (IOAC). IOAC which employs the cultivation and production of its wheatgrass grows in the air, soil free, longer live and pot holes free.

By combining the ocean with the sources, Amy Pho says Wheatgrass contains 17 amino acids, 13 vitamins, 8 minerals, fiber, protein, chlorophyll enzymes which act as powerful antioxidant to help protect our body from free radical damage, enhance our immune system, improve cardiovascular health and reduce the risk of heart diseases and high blood pressure, even blood sugar disorders like diabetes. Since Amy Pho says Wheatgrass is cold processed it retains all the nutritional benefits of fresh wheatgrass, and actually contains more nutrition because it is concentrated.

With the unique horizontal Tech nology the wheatgrass plant is com pelled to produce concentrated amounts of electronic acid, a phyto nutrient that is highly effective in fighting cancer cells and the help pre vent cancer formation. The leaves of wheatgrass contain about 70 percent chlorophyll, in addition to many of the vitamins, minerals, fiber and pro teins that are necessary for our diet. Known as "liquid sunshine," chloro phyll, the protein regulates life-family assembles human red blood cells and other tissue regenerates, activates oxygen to ally to wheatgrass for many purpo ses throughout the digestive tract, giving our body access to vital nutri ents, including rebuilding new healthy cells and tissues.

There are a number of women who have tried Amy Pho says Wheatgrass.

A certified supermodel, Toni Del Rosario, quit her job in 2004 because of her frequent hospitalizations due to her endometriosis and severe bleed ing. She tried Amy Pho says after see ing it on TV. "My daughters and I be ondemandly bought our two each of pure wheatgrass and benefits with history. I really felt my energy level increased. Even friends noticed I looked better and bought for themselves as well. I couldn't be happier, so now I am energized and definitely healthier."

Caroline Lim, a homemaker, started taking wheatgrass in Septem ber 2009 upon the prodding of her good friend. Always experiencing fluctuat ency-anxiety and back pains, Caroline began to notice some thing difference after she drank wheat grass. Her back did not hurt as much and she did not have to sit still. Caro line continued drinking Amy Pho says Pure Wheatgrass and Honey. "I used to have chest pains, headaches and suffered from arthritis and asth ma but I tested to have it all since I drank the taking medications. Amy Pho says Wheatgrass helped me im prove my health condition: my chest pain subsided, my heartburn is gone, my arthritis has greatly lessened and now I can take a flight of stairs with no difficulty in breathing. I have more energy throughout the day, my skin found improvement and no more stomach ulcer pain."

Amy Pho says it the only wheat grass that includes both the leaves and the roots to maximize give you the maximum benefits of vitamins, min erals, 17 amino acids and chlorophyll.

For more information 0999 1111 or call free 1-800-10-888-1111 or visit www.wheatgrassinc.com

Facial center launches new product

(FEBRUARY) Luxe Facial Center and Spa recently launched its du au Australian brand known for high-quality facial products, machine treatments, and body polish.

Exclusively distributed by Urban Luxe Facial Center and Spa, the Italic Cosmeceutical line presents industry-only products from Australia with high-strength active ingredients that bring unparalleled results to skin treatment and skincare. Use of these products require professional diagnosis by aestheticians. Cosmeceutics which is a standard in other Luxe clients, youth be first subject to skin consultation and analysis, after which the aesthetician will recommend the suitable treatment based on your skin type and specific requirements, ensuring that each treatment caters to exactly what you really need.

The product line is divided into categories—cleanse and preparation products which include the Foaming Cleanser for problematic skin and cleanse for normal skin, and the tonic which refreshes the skin using botanical plant extracts, the powerful and nutrient products such as the Vitamin C Serum which contains Retinol ACE a star ingredient from Japan, the Super C Serum (5 percent to be used in the morning and has higher percentage of Retinol ACE as well as the Multi V Serum or multivitamin serum which contains vitamin A, B, and F which is good for acne, and the Retinol A.D. which also has Vitamins F and H to sooth out pebbles and broken capillaries, and the Renew Cream, Glow Serum, and Spot Defy. All of the serums are available as retail products.

There are also eye lift and hydrate retail products such as Eye Rise which has a plumping effect to lift the eye area, Eye Perfect to smooth wrinkles, Eye C Serum to reduce premature aging and puffiness, and Eye Energizer which contains Vitamins C and Vitamin E. Ayla Wash is the moisturizing mix, healer, exfoliating and peeling products. Add also that all across the which includes the Clear Moisturizer, the Clear Quick Draw which opens the pores and relieves redness, and an anti-aging line which includes Hyaluronic, a serum which removes facial lines, Retinol Cream to promote elasticity, and Smooth Emulsion for collagen production and reduce the appearance of wrinkles.

Truly, Urban Luxe is not just a place for royal pampering, but also the venue for a head-to-toe transformation.

Urban Luxe is located at Southgate ORD. Finance Drive, Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang.

Ads

■ Scholasticans keep Cory legacy alive /E2

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Does Shalani look heartbroken?

FRIENDS WHO were with her two or three days ago say Fine Girl friend Shalani Soledad was looking lovelier and happier than ever—this, even at the height of the controversy that she and her boyfriend of one year and five months, Presidential Bodyguard "Kuyawoy" Aquino III, have split up.

Soledad graced a very special and small dinner where her photograph was taken. And she didn't look heartbroken to us.

The 'embrace'

Sports blogger Chris Chase wrote about Nole, "losing with grace, Novak Djokovic proved he's a champion" in the US Open last week.

Chase observed how Djokovic and champion Rafael Nadal hugged at the end of the match, after Nadal fell to the ground in exhilaration.

"It is good a loser as Djokovic runs, Nadal was just as good a winner. If you're a young athlete in any sport, take a page from Nole and Nadal. Win with grace and lose with dignity."

Roger Federer's loss to Djokovic two days before that, however, he wrote, was a different scene altogether.

Chanel 'curse!'

A stylista certainly makes a bad sports fashion. Watching Serbian fan to Djokovic, this stylista had eyes only for Bellow fan, Vogue's editor Anna Wintour (MIRYA H)

SEPTEMBER TREATS

City Garden Hotel

BALLSY AQUINO-CRUZ (first row, center) with St. Scholastica's College High School Batch '86. Front row: Ellen Sia, Domingo, Jessica Blas, Cristelyn Lum, Elaine Baloing, Tina Puno, AC Legarda, Sharon de la Peña, Pamela Domingo, Patricia Balgoámo, Becky Feliciano. Back row: Myla Maru, Bea Serrano, Jenna Gaite, Winnie Sauro, Cora Raymundo, Jemma Dalde, Annette Go, Carol Concepcion, Mya Castillo, Mayen Yun, Chokit Barros, Anna Lee and Tori Sese

CRUZ, who attended the launch as the Aquino family's representative, says her mom lived the life of a true Scholastican—through working and praying.

Scholasticans keep Cory legacy alive

BALLSY Aquino-Cruz, Swatch Philippines President Virgie Ramos and St Scholastica's College Manila President Sr. Angelica Levina, OSB

Batch '86 unveils college watch

By Annelle S. Tayao

SINCE HER death last year, former President Corazon C. Aquino has been honored in many creative ways—fashion, books, visual art, even accessories—proving the Filipinos' deep love for one of the country's symbols of democracy.

Doing their part in keeping the Cory legacy alive is St. Scholastica's College (SSC) High School Batch '86. The batch launched the St. Scholastica's College Watch by Swatch.

As Sept. 11 marked's serving as a reunion of Batch '86 alumni, the watch was unveiled at Greenbelt 5, Makati. Representing the Aquino family was Ballsy Aquino-Cruz.

The timepiece's design incorporates the words "Ora et Labora," which means "prayer and work," values instilled in every Scholastican.

"It's also what my mom learned in St. Scholastica, working and praying—something she did her whole life," Cruz said. "It's also what I personally live by."

The eldest of the Aquino siblings even shared her favorite story about her mom and SSC: "She was just supposed to be the [grade school] substitute, but Ate was doing the test, and the substitute's family had to evacuate. So, in deciding would have it, she became the valedictorian."

The supposed substitute, Celine Dagum, still says to this day that Cory really deserved the honor.

The watch's unveiling is also part of Batch '86's Silver Jubilee anniversary celebration.

In true Scholastican spirit, SSCHS Batch '86 alumni will donate a portion of the watch's sales to the Corazon C. Aquino Professorial Chair, a program which financially supports the educators' continuing studies. The professorial chair is under the St. Scholastica Research and Development Foundation.

"We take pride in being able to mold young ladies, in mind and heart, to become God-fearing leaders," said SSC Manila president Sr. Angelica Levina, OSB.

ON THE ST. Scholastica's College Watch by Swatch are the words "Ora et Labora," which mean "work and pray."

The St. Scholastica's College Watch by Swatch is available at Swatch stores in SM Megamall, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 5 and Trinoma; Swatch Kiosks in SM Mall of Asia, SM City North EDSA, Greenhills Promenade, Shangri-La Plaza, Robinsons Place Ermita, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Festival Mall and Ayala Center Cebu; and Axis in the Mall Shops in Alabang Town Center and Ayala Marquee Mall, Angeles, Pampanga.

SSC MANILA President Sr. Angelica Levina, OSB, and Swatch Philippines president Virgie Ramos formally launch the SSC College Watch. Proceeds from sale of the timepiece will go to the Corazon C. Aquino Professorial Chair of the St. Scholastica Research and Development Foundation.

Does Shalani look heartbroken?

from page E1

who was at "on Wittenstein" [unreadable] showing emotion—suddenly for the Ice Queen of fashion] an air marred for Valentino—in her summer Chanel-ized tweed.

"Must be that Chanel curse," he said, after the heartbreaking incident here. "Remember Jackie O was also in a Chanel when JFK was gunned down in Dallas, her First Chanel suit also." Pink?

Style notes and sports lifelong need never rest.

Britons are leaving

It's rumors today the Britons and some Filipino nurses here are resigning from the Philippine Britain Society.

Since a new board was "elected," we learned, there hasn't been much activity in the society. It is said that the members couldn't approve of the conduct of the election.

Tricia's new love

One of Manila's most glamorous women, Tricia Padilla, is going into a new romance.

At a lunch she's hosting next week, she and her friends will introduce Padilla Dee (unknown).

Now, that's a different niche. With many of the country's glamorous who refuse to stay idle, having gone into designing bags, jewelry, accessories, home decor and, of course, clothes, you'd think there's no lifestyle product left out there to endure with.

Well, Tricia has thought of one.

Botched

Just when you thought peeling, dicing, botox and other skin care and beauty procedures have become routine as he today, we got word that a friend had a botched chemical peeling procedure in a non-hype salon [so that common not Belo].

She suffered face burns after the routine was misinformed.

Really, one can't be too careful these days.

High-maintenance mistress

Talk is, a high-maintenance mistress [maintenance, as in several houses and several Birkins] is getting tired waiting to walk down the aisle with her lover, so that she's now seeing another man, a good provider so said. Now, that's killing time.

Tahanan holds mega sale

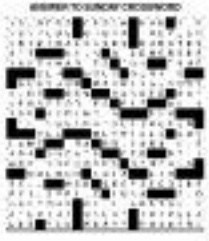
TAHANAN BOOKS offers sales of up to 50 percent on its entire publist at Manila International Book Fair. Incredible discounts await one and all who drop by Tahanan's Booth 207 [Aisle H] during the nation's biggest book event of the year. The book fair runs until today, 10 a.m.–8 p.m., at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia.

Unveiling a feast for the eyes, Tahanan's new offerings lead off with "A, he Alphoc: An Alphabet of Filipino Food" by Nelson Aguste. Bilingual description, seventy-two pages of lush, full-color photography of our most delicious and beloved native food. Agustin, who is based in Vancouver, Canada, is in town to sign copies of his book at 2–3:30 p.m.

Another new picture book is the aptly titled "Sly Naked." The story of a young boy's midnight shenanigans—told in only 65 words—is the perfect gift for toddlers. Rom Romeo' playful tale and his preciously BIG-gentle illustrations introduce the very young to the communicative sounds and nuances of the Filipino language. Romeo up was on hand to sign copies of his book at the Tahanan booth.

"The Love of My Richer: A Pitney Love Poem And the Rest" [published by ABS-Books] is the perfect year-round gift book for lovers, whatever the age. Rem and Ing ramendez-Bellen's Or Illustrators the amorous journey of two lovers, told in Filipino-English gentle humor as only Filipinos can express. It includes customized dedication and BIG paper where you can write personalized messages to the love of your life. De-will be signing copies of his book at the Tahanan booth today at 4:3:30 p.m.

For more information, call Trace or Joan at 6137165; e-mail tres@tahanan books.com.



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Couple bonded by East and West cultures

THE COUPLE, Marlene and Rob Moats, with their male principal sponsors

Happiness Heroes present the Coca-Cola-Jollibee Limited Edition UAAP Tumblers

From left (as right...Kenny Vergel, Coca-Cola Mat? Group Area account Manager; Abriel de Leon, Coca-cola Mat? key account Manager; Jocelyn Reyes, Asst. Development manager—Allied Cuadrante, Jollibee Vp for Marketing; Clarice Tesoro, Jollibee Asst. Brand manager; Aimee Rivacoa, Jollibee Marketing Manager; Jerlie Adina, Jollibee PR Manager; Kay Sagisorondo, Jollibee Brand Manager

THE BRIDE, Pia Antonia "Tish" Alonzo, with her parents, former Manila Representative Roxy Alonzo and Maria Pia Alonzo

Wedding designer joins bridal fair Sept. 24-25

ANGELA Ventura

Double blessings from Western Union continue and reach 100 families

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Sunday LIFESTYLE Relationships

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We find ways

Your bipolar friend–the misunderstood

Mood swings? He/she can't help it

First of two installments

By Chaire V. Aviñanmesa
Contributor

HIS MOTHER opened his bedroom door. He was hanging by a rope from the ceiling. No wonder her son was late for breakfast.

What do Sting, Axl Rose, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Carrie Fisher (the lady with a doughnut on both sides of her face in "Star Wars") and Ben Stiller have in common?

They all have the mental disorder called bipolar. So did the guy who killed himself swinging from the ceiling...suicide.

All of us who call ourselves normal don't understand why a family member or a friend has severe mood swings, more extreme than the normal ups and downs we experience every day.

On certain occasions, like last year's joyous Christmas reunion where 25 of us cousins and kids were together while "Joy to the World" was playing on the CCD, we were suddenly felt an intense burst of joy, energy, happiness and even dominated the conversation, as everyone sat down to watch the Manny Pina Rum. Everyone truly laughed at her jokes and we all became (it was really Joy to the World).

The next day, however, you don't want to be related to her (for a reminder, angry and her mouth shoots bullets of words that could kill you. That night, she is depressed and cannot join the family dinner because she is crying herself to sleep. Yesterday's laughing clown is today's roaring wild lion.

Hypocrisy

The Ceiling fan above woke up with unexplainable pain, loneliness, abandonment, no one understanding him. Just the night before, his older sister banged her bedroom door on him. So, he did what gave him the freedom to open a door to another world where he could be understood... a world he could only go to through suicide. Suicide would make travel him and bring him to His arms—the only One who could understand him.

Oprah Winfrey, the woman with the courage of a bull, decided to throw out the blanket of hypocrisy that screened people with the mental depression called bipolar.

So, our episode of her would misunderstanding show had celebrities who were brave enough to tell the world they had a bipolar mental disorder and were not ashamed to say so.

They would tell the world, no matter if it scarred their careers because it was time to tell the whole world to stop throwing their friends and brothers and sisters into the

(Cont. 1)

Axl Rose and Carrie Fisher

What is bipolar?

Bipolar disorder is a brain disorder. Chemical changes in the brain combine with biological, genetic and environmental factors that cause it. It is characterized by terrible mood swings. One day's suddenly angry or is completely sad, quiet and depressed). Functioning is daily life, especially relationships with family and friends, is strained or cut off permanently.

THE MANAGEMENT OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

The experts recommend plan that combines both MEDICATION and PSYCHOTHERAPY. A psychiatrist can help you with the medications needed and the kind of psychotherapy that is best for you and your family.

Family support is strongly needed for understanding and coping with Bipolar Disorder.

How my grandparents' story makes me appreciate my Dad more

ROOTS AND WINGS

Cathy Babao-Gotladlit

THE QUOTE "Luck is stronger than fiction" leapt at me from the pages of a 70-year old legal document and sent me hurtling for a couple of days.

I never met any of my grandfathers. My maternal grandfather died shortly after I was born, while my paternal grandfather died during World War II.

I've always been fascinated with war stories. Anne Frank was my hero. I love to read books about children and families in different parts of the world made it through the ravages of WW II.

Love stories from that period have held me captive and I've always believed that generation was the best.

I suppose this fascination has been in my genetic script, but something that could not be explained until decades later.

In 2006, I began my "search" for my father by visiting Antonio de Dateas. Fr. Dave Dumaja, who heads the alumni office, kindly put together a CD containing photos from dad's college years. I kept the CD and forgot all about it.

A few nights ago, while cleaning out my study space, I found the CD. In a sentimental mood, I uploaded dad's college graduation photo from 1941 on Facebook. Immediate, working late that night, left an angry re search on my grandfather's name Balbao in Google. A public service announcement and tonight he's the Philippine Lawn and Ja- ripe address dalabash (awardsnightfall.net).

This is where the war story begins.

Imagine the scene—Christmas Day, 1941, in a small town in Davao City. A train loaded Teodoro Tanchi) aka Teodoro Castro) barges into the home of a young couple such six-children between ages two and 10. Tanchi, a Japanese military orator, demands that the men surrender his firearms or he would kill the entire family.

Fearing for his family's safety on Dec. 28, 1941, the man, his brother and two cousins presented his .45 that Japanese soldiers could search through. They knew once search of the shot line. As if that were not enough, they decapitate him, and throw the four bodies into the sea.

A little over a week later, Imelda and a band of soldiers return to the house of the man's widow. As calls her that they have executed her husband and since that they chopped his head off because he was a sniper for the guerrillas in Davao. He then demands for food. The widow refuses as the last pretend to test and ransack her home. Taking their food, including the family's two German Shepherds, they leave the widow and her six children alone in their home.

My grandparents

The men they killed and decapitated was my grandfather Silem, and his widow, my grandmother, Jacobia. This case is archived at the University of Texas in Austin in examples of human rights violations, under the heading "Trial for War Crimes Committed in the Philippines, Teodoro Tanchi."

Unfortunately, according to the records, Tanchi was pardoned by President Elpidio Quirino for his heinous war crime. For the death of four people, Tanchi served only six years in prison.

Neither my father, child nor brothers, nor his younger siblings know the details of this story. Perhaps my grandmother wanted it spare them. They never celebrated their birthday's death anniversary, only his disappearance, which was enough, they deceptive him, and throw the four bodies into the sea.

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A married woman who's in love with a cyber acquaintance

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

DEAR EMILY,

I am 51 years old, married in a man eight years ago. Besides We have three children, ages nine, three and two.

I married my husband as I was get out of my single life and escape from the problems of my family.

I never found my husband and I don't think I can ever love him, despite the children. I like it that he is a responsible family man. I have no complaints about him. I appreciate him more.

So wonder life had certain misery message. A beautiful woman of Basque lineage, she has been here about nine years. No man would fall in love with her, she said.

For many years after the war, she would patrol the family property every day on horseback, a rifle on her side. She was a mountain of steel.

Despite life events make no pride and wonder why they are so. Sit too and stare, and ask why we are made to go through such difficulties, why we cannot have what we want, certain behaviors from those we love like ourselves.

Then redemption comes.

Writer Anne Lamott says, "Grace never leaves you where it has found you."

It really does. Even if it takes 70 years to accomplishing, there is always his grace.

E-mail the author at emily-babao@gmail.com.

—Anne

What did you think marriage was—an escape hatch? And why drove kids? Did you think you were just a receptacle and played-dead?

It is true that you can't be single, loved on or legislated. It has to come naturally, from a hand here to the biggest here—having to taking that he is a much alone as an he is on hand. He has to hear the sun open space for months on end, running the minutes he'll be with you, only to be pressed by a time of cold flesh. Seems like only he children set able to love his unconditionally.

It is probably true that the darkest you aren't, seven in wipe off your face is coming from the happiness you're getting from this cyber love affair. Be very wary of this new development. You are in love with an illusion, and you help hard it constantly by telling yourself how lovelorn you are in this marriage.

Lush does not always come of sex in life, or he careful with what you pray for, they say, drop thinking of yourself as a romantic, pause, and look at the big picture. Examine every layer of it, as your eyes may reveal how lucky you are—a husband who is working his butt off providing you with your material needs, who loves you, perhaps in his own way, he tell you, and healthy children.

You got into marriage because you had family problems. Now that you've escaped those problems and are now married with a family of your own, you seem to be so much a hurry and can hardly wait—to create new problems for yourself.

The saying "from the frying pan to the fire," ain't repeated over and over for nothing. You could be setting it cooking to yourself. —*Anne*

E-mail your advice@inquirer.com.ph, subject: Lifestyle.

Biggest Printing Industry Event Slated for October

The biggest printing and graphic arts expo from 4 countries Philippines, a set to welcome trade buyers and visitors to a vast display of the latest equipment, supplies, and materials. This show, organized by the Philippine Center for Printing Excellence (PCPE), Philippine Printing Technical Foundation (PPTF), and Philippine Graphic Arts Federation, Inc. (PGAF), will be held on October 6 – 9, 2010 at the premiere exhibition venue, the SMX Convention Center.

Print & Label Philippines continues to be an unparalleled event where it comes to bringing together key industry players and buyers. Last year alone, the show welcomed more than 13,000 in four days. These trade visitors came from the Philippines and other countries. The total attendance was counted over 3,100 sq. m., and the event generated more than 111.6 million worth of sales made on site.

VAST DISPLAY OF PRODUCTS

"Fit 4 M – Transforming Enterprises Achieving Milestones" serves as the overall theme of this year's exhibition. Marching together in achieving the printing and graphic arts industry to achieve greater heights, PRINT & LABEL PHILIPPINES 2010 is ready to engage and further boost the event.

With a comprehensive line of products and services on display, the show offers visitors in the event everything they can possibly need for their printing and graphic arts needs, including: adhesives, art supplies & materials, coating & finishing equipment, CAD/CAM/CAE software, computer publishing, converting equipment, copiers, cutters & printers, digital conference services, digital equipment, film & film processing machines, graphic design machines, hardware & software, packaging, packaging materials, inks, coating & dyes, laminating machines, marking machines, materials handling equipment, paper products, pre-press machines, printing machines, wide-format printers, screen printing machines, self-adhesive labels, stickers, spreadsheet equipment, and

PRINT AND INDUSTRY SHOW OF FORCE AT PRINT & LABEL EXPO. The event signing ceremony and industry briefing was recently conducted at the Dusit Thani Manila. Present during the event are PCPE Executive Director Ma. Victoria Corpuz; PCPE Chairman and Director Tan- Presidents of PCPE. This was witnessed by (standing from left) Raymond Ongpin, Bro.Art Mendoza, Jose Cobo, and Sammy Ng, all Directors of PCPE respectively. Present (seated, left) are Patrick Lawrence Tan, CEO of Global Link MP; Anna Diamonden Bolano, President of Flextech; Jose "Boyet" Tan Diego and Ramon Dominguez, Directors of PPTF; Ma. Victoria Corpuz, 1st and 2nd VP Rudy Mateo of PPTF respectively; and Jing Lagundacin, COO of Global Link MP

PRINTING INDUSTRY LEADERS JOIN FORCES AT PRINT & LABEL EXPO. With the focus of the printing industry now shifting to investments in full automation, advance technology, innovative solutions, and environmental friendly practices, the printing leaders announce that PRINT & LABEL PHILIPPINES 2010 is going to be a full-force and empowered by presence of having such an event that will address their growing needs to be globally competitive. Some of those in attendance included (from left): Philip Lee, Director of PCPE; William Chua, Director of PCPE; Rolando "Rolly" Ramos, President of PPTF; Sammy Ng, Director of PCPE; Eric Hernandez, Director of PCPE; Jesus Ao, Past President of PCPE; and Jimmy Co – Events Chairman

normal equipment, and many more.

SPECIALIZED EXHIBIT AREAS

Print and Label Philippines 2010 promises more than just exhibits as it showcases six (6) specialized exhibit areas within the exhibition to guarantee that all aspects of the industry are represented. One of these activities is the Printing Clinic Service Provider Pavilion, where participating printing services in the printing industry such as commercial printing, trade magazine, corrugated, paper-cutting services, and more. A first, this pavilion is the event's response to the market's need for top quality service suppliers.

The Printing Services Workshop, on the other hand, gives a solid foundation. This is an area where service companies will not just exhibit but will provide on-site printing services as well. Printing machines and equipment will be running during the four-day exhibit, thereby presenting visitors with a chance to see the machines in action. Moreover, the show is backed in this exact setting, given to the printing industry at large, to discuss best ideas in or near 30% more than the standard prices.

Lastly, there will be the Silent Auction Area, which will display both brand-new and second-hand printing-related equipment, products, and services. Proceeds from the silent auction will be used to fund scholarships for deserving graphic design students of the National University of the Philippines (NUP), and to also refurbish the building in the name of "Tomas Pinpin, "The Printer of Filipino Printers".

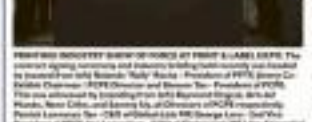
ADDED SPECIAL ACTIVITIES & ATTRACTIONS

This year also marks the beginning of various special activities that are targeted to be held annually for printing industry members. This includes the first ever Tomas Pinpin Print Awards and the Tomas Pinpin Golf Cup, its namesake. Known as "The Printer of Filipino Printers", is mostly recognized for printing the first book (*Librong Pagbasa*) in 1637 and is generally considered as the first printer who has adapted for the typical events of his time under the PPTF & Label Series.

"We organized a lot of special events this year, meant to create more opportunities for industry members to interact and to showcase their abilities. Tomas Pinpin is the central theme of these activities. We named them after a printer in honor of his memory. Print & Label is all about," says Jimmy Co, Chairman of Print & Label Philippines 2010.

The PPTF will also be holding once again their seminar series target- ed to those who want to enhance their knowledge on the various aspects of printing. Their seminar topics are as follows: Print Inspection, Print Print Standards, Planning and Press Management, Information Systems, Process Management, Surviving Economic Crisis through Total Quality Management, the Versatility of Letterpress Printing, and Addressing Corporate Governance Issues, Scattergood and Flows.

For more information on Print & Label Philippines, please contact Global Link MP Events at 750-8888 and kindly look for Ms. Liza Mora, the AGM for this project. You may also direct your inquiries through email to liza.mora@globallinkmp.com.



PRINTING ORGANIZATION ASSOCIATION TECHNICAL SEMINARS & BUSINESS FORUMS. Upon signing the agreement between PPTF PCPE and Global Link MP for PRINT & LABEL PHILIPPINES 2010, a full schedule of technical seminars and business forums shall be held in the development and growth of the printing industry in the country. This session was undoubtedly standing from (left): Patrick Lawrence Tan, CEO of Global Link MP; Anna Diamonden Bolano, President of Flextech; Jose "Boyet" Tan Diego and Ramon Dominguez, Directors of PPTF; Ma. Victoria Corpuz, 1st and 2nd VP Rudy Mateo of PPTF respectively; and Jing Lagundacin, COO of Global Link MP

Your bipolar friend

From page F1

loosey tie. And stop the excuses that families and friends would cover up to hide their families' shame.

When Sinead O'Connor did, the woman took me, the first to share her head of hair, could be interpreted as those of a person had increased energy activity and tenderness, saying thoughts that jump from one idea to another and rapid speech. So, when she got on that stage to blow up the advertising audience, she performed the same way she did every time. She didn't need any drug. She would be squawking and up like a pumped-up rat balloon.

One celebrity had this to tell Oprah, and that I similarly quote from a doctor, both a psychiatrist and endorsed that 1 in 4 people in the Philippines). "Bipolar people have unrealistic feelings of personal power to accomplish any task, also, poor judgment, increased sexual drive (also quoted in 'Mad About Jesus') (plus an energy) and of elevated mood and drugs." That is why having a psychiatrist who knows the neurology strategy of your drugs and personality is so important.

A patient says: "I didn't know anybody in South Africa, so I went to the Internet. I went to run on the Internet. We had fun! All those letters in living black and white styles!"

But now, in hindsight, she was choked, tragically and horribly, that she would have been hurt by the stranger; and if she'd been more dreadful happened to her, her body would have known where to look for her dead body.

Can't help it

Where am I leading in with all these?

I am leading you to understand the misunderstood.

They can't help it. It's genetic.

He doesn't need your daily dose of scolding about what a worthless person he is and when he can't cope behaving like a burning, singing boy.

She doesn't need to be told she will never find a man to call her husband because no man can tolerate her screams when she is angry and self-righteous.

They don't need us to cold they will end up living alone.

Because they will.

"SE you need a love"—the families' song.

That's exactly what they need.

A human hug, a human kiss, a human rub on the forehead when they're crying, and a human, a human hand rubbing her back when she is crying, and a human hand to hold on to when she is falling into her black hole.

Then, yes, who use "normal," should be hug her, (only, to a doctor who knows her, and who is very comforted with medications will help her.

A doctor told me that medication must be taken to control the mood swings. And, yes, for a lifetime.

And, she needs to talk to someone who can "professionally" understand her. We are accompany her to her sessions with the doctor so you are enlightened, too. However, the doctor I talked to warned that she should choose a good therapist who knows and appreciates and not just medicates and "drugs" her.

There are support groups such as Cebuano Citizens for Emotionally Handicapped Persons (CCEHP) and Mood Disorders Support Group (psycho-education) every first Saturday of the month at Mahon Medical Center.

But most of all, there is understanding and forgiveness. Sometimes, that (mother or friend) of yours did not know what she did. Her memory has blocked it out. Forgive her for it.

Try to be steadfast yourself and open-body your brain and heart to the bipolar sister/friend who had you. And surely, where there is understanding, there is love.

Love from your friends, even if they don't understand you.

Love from a sister you want to embrace because you remember you played jumping rope with her at 8 sat.

Who can define love? Some have tried.

But only you know why. And will try.

Next Sunday: Sleep?

Other sources: A Public Service Brochure from the Philippine Psychiatric Association and Author, Operah.com.

Huge discounts and prizes in supermarket's anniversary promo

SHOPWISE CELEBRATES its 12th anniversary with Shop Crazy, its biggest promotion this year. Shop Crazy covers big deals, prizes and surprises. Discounts and instant prizes are being given until Oct. 23.

Last year's Shop Crazy promotion drove customers wild as they wiped out almost 100 tons of grapes in six days. Grocery items such as Coca-Cola two-liter bottles, Alaska Mold orange juice and 12-pack bathroom tissue were offered for only P5 for a minimum purchase. Customers went nuts with the discounts as they bought over 180,000 eggs, 60 tons of chicken leg quarters, 20,000 Argentina Corned Beef cans, 15,000 Monde Nissin Master Sweet Ham and 15,000 pieces of French baguettes, all in a matter of days.

This year, Shopwise unveils its first ever offline Buy 1 Take 1 items, such as meat, fish, shoes, kitchenware, clothes, mobile phones and even TVs. A minimum purchase entitles customers to a chance to win their weight in rice. Every 58 kg of one's weight is equal to one kilo of rice, free.

Shop Crazy has discounts and prizes worth over P11 million for shoppers.

According to Frances Yu, vice president for marketing of Shopwise, "Shop Crazy is our signature promotion. It is our way of thanking our loyal customers for making us their supermarket of choice. And the best way to treat our customers is to source the best deals and prizes that offer them unmatched value for money," Shopwise is in Commonwealth, Makati, Libis, Fairgrounds, ground floor of Harrison Plaza Mall, Starmall Alabang, Asiatic Centre, Cubao and Astral Road center Interim Avenue, Santiago City.

SHARING TV and grapes. Win your weight in rice prizes (right)

Ayala Land at the Helm of Sustainable Development

Enhance. Enrich. Sustain.

Sustainability for the Ayala Hills Group runs in four utilities. Green design elements are incorporated into the malls' structure to help reduce negative environmental impact

Ayala Malls also recently launched its Greenology campaign and shared its philosophy on sustainability during an event for tenants' employees. Fashion designer's ellecreambelle II was a collection design made from recyclable bags, an example of which were on these dresses—Sunstar

Greenbelt 5's Green Mall is sustainable, features clean indoor energy consumption

AyalaLand

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We have always been green. Enhancing land and enriching lives not only for the present generation but for the generations to come, this has always been our commitment. Each day, we strive to have the lowest levels of environmental impact in all our developments by adopting sound design strategies and making sure that the communities surrounding our developments enjoy true social responsibility. **Ayala Land, changing the landscape of genuine sustainability.**

AyalaLand

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Airline's HK-to-Moscow flight launch /G3

Sunday LIFESTYLE

'Sweet 16' bash for a Virgo princess

TESSA! Tessa Prieto-Valdes

A SWEET SIXTEEN is certainly a milestone that deserves more than just a cake-and-ice-cream celebration. Although, in the case of my mom, Mariel Prieto, she'll rather have a low-key affair, like a golfing sunshine with my dad, Alex, at Shangri-La Boracay Resort in Boracay Island.

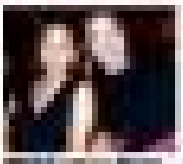
Sensing being 70, my siblings, Sandy and Paolo, and I decided to give her a surprise bash in a posh dinner Shangri-La, the Makati flagship. Sandy roped in mom's Assumption batch (41 '56) and her friends golf group, while Paolo and I pulled in the relatives.

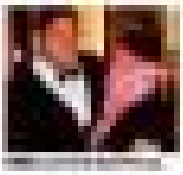
Every start of a new decade deserves a video, so we mailed one filled with her photos from childhood to marriage to grandmotherhood, all edit and quickly put together by Liezl Montemayor (id 49150696911). Friends and family all wrote her personal birthday wishes and each shared a favorite memory of a time they spent with her.

The video provided by the parties was so intriguing, especially the ones from her child-

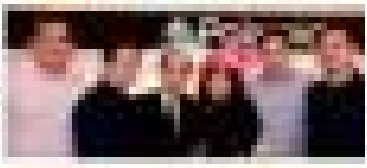
(WEST to G2)

HIGH left to right, golf buddies Cora Sunday and Maribel Diggin, Assumption batch '56 Lotty Laurel, Vicky Ferreiro, birthday girl Mariel Prieto, Vicky Cruz, Marlyn Pardo and Hilda Duenas

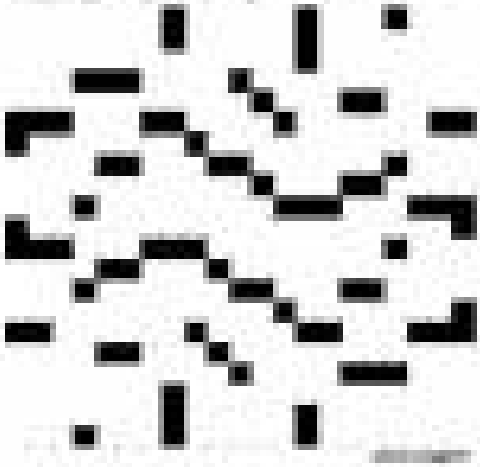




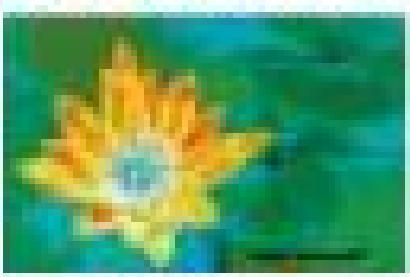
'Sweet 16' bash for a Virgo princess

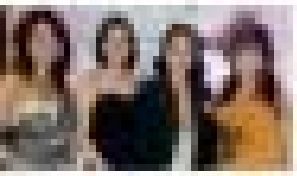


Senior Crossword

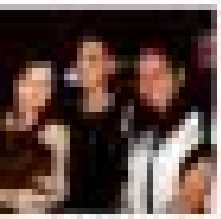


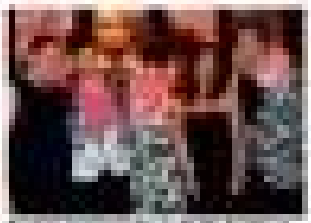
Feliz Sta. Maria's photo power fascies

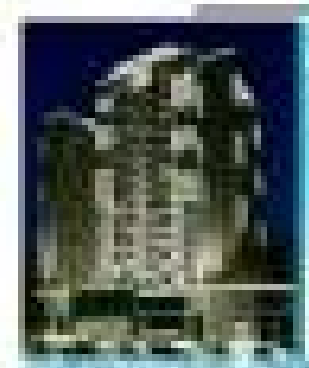




Airline launches its HK to Moscow flight with cocktail party







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Naga celebrates 300 years of devotion to 'Ina'

BOTH PILGRIMS and local devotees of Our Lady of Peñafrancia filled up the grounds of the Naga Metropolitan Cathedral on Sept. 8 for the Pontifical Mass marking the 300th anniversary of the devotion to "Ina," patroness of Bicolandia. Almost 400 priests are having the altar covered by a three-inch stained-glass religious paintings by Pancho Flame. Cardinal Rosales officiated the concelebrated Mass with Legazpi Bishop Joel Baylon, Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes, SVD, and Daet Bishop Gilbert Garces.

When the 500-year-old image of Our Lady of Peñafrancia in an ondo was carried by priests in black soutanes, the grand choir burst into song. The people rose and sang with them "Himno a la Virgen de Peñafrancia," while they waved their handkerchiefs. For the first time, the image passed through the newly built Porta Aleluc, a three-story structure built by the Peñafrancia Devotees of Metro Manila Foundation, Inc., headed by retired general Salvador Mison.

When she passed by, photographer Arsenio Medina and fashion designer Ali Xiah Garcia reached out to touch the base of "Ina's" statues and felt great pimples.

When she was near me, I whispered prayers rule-of-thumb.

PORTA Marian is the gateway to the Naga Metropolitan Cathedral. Inset: Our Lady of Peñafrancia

"Ina," Our Father, lawyer Odilo Rodriguez and another Daet lessee involved in the devotion. Sons remember that in the '80s, a priest left behind on the street. The child died and the priest went to their Mogs Sorbrete Baby for help. Mogs Baby gave him the medal of "Ina". The priest put the medal on the dead child and the same back to life.

Lilibeth Guanzon and her classmates (3rd Class "B" of College) do the ballad) have great devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia. Guanzon, at the Ateneo campus on Magsaysay Avenue (across Bob Marbella's circle the last) today I was there, they recalled their experiences. They were Misters Abogado-Ortiza, Yoly Bellosa-Colcolla, Emma Legaspi, Lourdes Oliva and Ana Sombay.

Her sons and daughters

In an homily Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, OP, said, "For 300 years, the Bicolanos have kept themselves within the embrace of 'Ina.' To be a Bicolano is to be her son or daughter. Devotion to her strengthens our faith."

Little stories of faith

Rosy Abrams, a medical technologist at the Bicol Medical Center, has been going to her Novena every year with his mother since he was a little boy. Now, as a young man, his love for "Ina" has become stronger following their altercations help him.

Myra Rodriguez-Sanchez told me that her parents moved to Naga from Laoag in 1954, so as a young girl she already knew about

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Dayag

Porta Mariae

The Porta Mariae that now serves as gateway to the Naga cathedral is a great donation built by devotees of "Ina," Many were moved to the construction by the board members of the Peñafrancia Devotees of Metro Manila Foundation. The officers are retired general Salvador Mison, chairman; SC Supt. Teresa Bestoy III, president; Antonio Uriza, vice president; Engr. Nicefredo Pinto, corporate secretary; Jose Villamor Mercado, treasurer; Atty. Manuel Ruiz Jr., ex-officio counsel; Antonio Aguilar Medina, Nicanor Pardigon, Henry Tiffauni and Agustin Abreu, members.

Porta Mariae was designed by Sept. 9 by Archbishop Legaspi. On the third floor are the paintings of Pancho Flame and sculptures of Ted Wadalo.

'Ina' in Metro Manila

A Bicol procession from Guadalupe Bridge to Santa Ana Church on Sept. 12 ended at the Manila Cathedral where Bishop Broderick Pabillo presided and a thousand devotees welcomed him.

Organized by the Archdiocesan Devotees of Metro Manila Association headed by Fr. Clemente Ybiernas, the procession took place for one week before the actual fiesta in Naga on Sept. 18.

Concelebrating the Mass were Msgr. Jesulito Ilak, Msgr. Jun Escalante, Fr. Alex Divinagrao, Fr. Ramil Espeng, SSD and Fr. Fino Serrano, SSP. In his homily, Fr. Divinagrao said that the devotion to "Ina" is Visiting today, believing that "This massive devotion is but a gift that should be shared with everyone. Apparently, this is happening because of the thousands of devotees among ours Bicolanos who are going to Naga for the fiesta.

Fr. Divinagrao observed that "Ina" intercedes for the miraculous healing by God of Archbishop Legaspi who was suffering from lung cancer.

A week before the start of the festivities, doctors confirmed that the cancer was gone.

National day of prayer

Oral Gabriel Ms. Jasmin Lopez described Sept. 12 as a happy and blessed day for the Bicolanos. One of the activities of the 8-day National Day of Prayer for Peace and Unification of Priests, an estimated 5,000 devotees of Our Lady, Mediatrix of All Grace, attended the concelebrated Mass presided by Cardinal Vidal outside the Cathedral Shrine by at 2:30 p.m.

Professor Lopez said, "The good news is that we have a powerful patron and intercessor in the Virgin to recognize the Blessed Virgin Mary's appeal to be our Carmelite protector and now adding her visionary, Teresita Castillo, attended by dozens of nuns in 1946 to be with."

St. Padre Pio feast day

Catholic Churches all over the world will celebrate the feast day of St. Padre Pio on Sept. 23 who died in 1968.

Two significant dates in the Philippines is the St. Padre Pio Parish and Shrine in Sto. Tomas, Batangas and Chapel of St. Pio Philippine Center in Bagumbayan St., Ilog, Quezon City.

Xiao Bishop Chito Tagle will ordain 1,000 child and host's year high school students of Calaloan and Bayabasa on Sept. 24 at 10 a.m. at the gymnasium of Calaloan in Silang, Cavite. The date of confirmation is scheduled next the first anniversary of Msgr. Al Schwartz (Sept. 18) and when Bishop is available. Sisters of Mary are in charge.

16-year-old writer to launch book of short stories

SAMANTHA Cajimat

WHEN SAMANTHA Mae Cojimar was barely 13 years old, she had already published three titles under the Anvil imprint. Now along to turn 16, this third-year high school student—a national's student junior tennis player with several championship wins—will launch her fourth literary work, "Flight to the Stars & Other Stories."

It is a collection of three short fictions that underscore themes of teenage life and Filipino family dynamics.

Samantha began writing short stories using a laptop at age six. With a penchant for daydreaming, she also did the same old question, 'why are we here?'

Samantha comes among her favorite authors Enid Blyton, Roald Dahl, Beverly Cleary, Stephenie Meyer and J.K. Rowling, which may partly explain her passion for reading and writing.

She has been mentored by some of the country's prize-winning writers, including Carla Pacis, Lara Espinosa and Carlos Palanca Hall of Famer Ed Maranan, aside from having had excellent English and Literature teachers in school. She is an honor student who represents her school in academic competitions.

She plans to become a film writer and animation artist.

"Flight to the Stars & Other Stories" is on display at the pavilion of National Bookstore and Anvil Publishing at the Manila International Book Fair, SMX Hall of Asia until Sept. 19, and will have a formal launch at the SMX Bookwell Center on Oct. 2.

FIGHTING DENGUE WITH ACE HARDWARE

There's been an alarming rise in reported cases of dengue fever brought about by the rainy season. And now is the best time to take steps in preventing this disease carried by the dreaded Aedes Aegypti mosquito.

At the Helpful Place, ACE Hardware has innovative ways of keeping your home dengue-free. Protect your family against mosquitoes and other insects with the Pop Up Mosquito Net. A modern take-off from the mosquito nets our grandparents used, it can be used on the floor or on a bed. Its zippered opening gives it easy access and protection against mosquitoes and other insects. The best part is that it's so easy to install – no stands, hooks, or poles required. It is also easy to store and pack away as it is lightweight, compact, and portable. Folding down almost flat making it ideal for traveling. This is also available at the Baby Company and Homeworld sections of the SM Department Store.

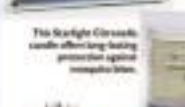
Other ways to keep your home dengue-free? ACE Hardware has, in selected stores, fumigation machines like the Mist Blower Sprayer, which can be used in homes, offices and other public places. There are also insect repellent stores like OFF! and electronic mosquito killers that give maximum protection, as well as mat anti dengue mosquitoes that are highly effective, safe, and energy efficient. The Starlight Citronella Candle, on the other hand, will not only give your room a warm glow and keep it mosquito-safe, but also help save the environment.

And while buying a Pop Up Mosquito Net and other dengue stuff from ACE Hardware and ACE Builders stores, also check out its Home Hardware Basics promotion, which is ongoing until September 30, 2010. Avail of great savings and discounts on DIY essentials and earn rewards points when you use your SM Advantage, Prestige, and BDO Rewards Cards.

ACE Hardware stores are located at SM Makati, SM Cubao, SM Hypermarket in Makati, and at all SM Supermalls nationwide. ACE Builders stores are located at SM City North EDSA, SM City Fairview, and SM City Pampanga. Visit our website at www.acehardware.ph.

Get a good night sleep with this Pop Up Mosquito Net. Available colors are green, lilac, pink and blue.

This Dainsmo Professional Insect Killer has a built-in safety fan and can be stand or be suspended.



This Starlight Citronella candle offers long-lasting protection against mosquito bites.

This Baygon Mat Anti-Dengue Mosquitoes provides up to 8 hours of smoke-free protection against mosquitoes.

Use this Pop Up Mosquito Net in children's play pens to protect your kids from mosquitoes and other flying insects.

This OFF Overtime Insect Repellent Lotion has a new sleeve formula which has a cool effect on your skin.

This Pop Up Mosquito Net is convenient a carry-bag and once removed pops up to form a self-supporting mosquito net.

The Fumigating Mist Blower Sprayer is available only at SM Fairview, SM City North EDSA, SM Southmall and SM Megamall.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernesto C. Velarde

Ryan Reynolds: Life with Scarlett Johansson, 'Green Lantern,' being 'Buried'

RYAN Reynolds: "It's great to go toe-to-toe and show."

LOS ANGELES—Ryan Reynolds likes the intensity of his career, that he can go from "buried," where he's inside a coffin throughout the movie (no scenes except the occasional distracting scuttle) to "Green Lantern," which entrusted $150-million budget makes the former film's $3 million cost seem like loose change.

What makes Ryan smile is that the flick with him in it has been getting good buzz since it premiered in last January's Sundance Film Festival, where we first saw the Rodrigo Cortés-directed thriller. "I thought to myself that no one's going to see this movie," Ryan told us in a recent interview. He plays Paul, a U.S. contractor in Iraq who wakes up to find himself buried six feet under, with a cell phone, a lighter and nothing else. He cusses against time to avoid being buried prematurely.

Wire work and gymnastics

The actor, noted for his bemused manner, who seems always on the verge of cracking a joke, was especially tickled that the gruelling sometimes he underwent inside the coffin turned out to be worth it. "What the hell am I doing?" he remembered asking himself during a particularly challenging day in Barcelona, Spain, where the film was shot. "You shouldn't like the movie gained freezing and people are seeing and understanding it."

"Green Lantern" posed different challenges, obviously," Ryan said about his other much-buzzed-about role based on DC Comics' superhero/space cop. "It involved a lot of wire work and gymnastics. As soon as I strapped Purdell, I went into a gymnastics program in New York for six months." In his signature understated wit, Ryan quipped, "It do four, two verbos tell person has no business wrestling, I couldn't find only us. But they did teach me a lot. I was able to do some interesting things."

Asked if playing a comic book hero was a boyhood dream of his, Ryan concurred, saying, "When you get a chance to do something like that, you watch a lot of that dream you had when you were small, when anything was possible. To see yourself standing up there on the big screen, and they've got the best costume in the world, the best stunt guys, the best talents, and you get to be that guy is an amazing feeling."

"But where it really hits home is with the nieces and nephews," Ryan said, typically shifting the conversation to a more down-to-earth and humorous level. "I have five of them. This is the only movie I've ever done that they are excited to see. That's all they talk about. I am not even Uncle Ryan anymore; I am Green Lantern. Like, 'Where is Green Lantern's crossing over?' 'Could they find Ryan to take them to the premiere but they have to sit through 'Buried' first. Without blinking."

Dick Van Dyke bod

While there is literally no genre outside DC's all CGI on his resume a full-body motion capture suit during Shrek 3, Ryan, already built to begin with, kept himself in even better shape. "You work out for three movies," he said matter-of-factly. "I finished 'Green Lantern' about a month ago." Breaking into a smile, he of course had to quip, "So I'm slowly smashing my way back to my Dick Van Dyke body."

Does his wife Scarlett Johansson prefer

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Ruben V. Nepales

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CHEER FACTOR

SACHA Baron Cohen

Sacha: Ready, Freddie, go!

LOS ANGELES—"Borat" star Sacha Baron Cohen is set to play flamboyant rocker Freddie Mercury in a cinematic feature on the latter's glory days at Queen.

The untitled film is being written by Peter Morgan, British scribe behind "The Queen" and "The Last King of Scotland." No director has been named, but shooting begins next year, and Graham King, whose GK Films is partnering on the project with Robert de Niro and Jane Rosenthal's Tribeca Productions, and Queen manager Jim Beach. Reuters

FREDDIE Mercury

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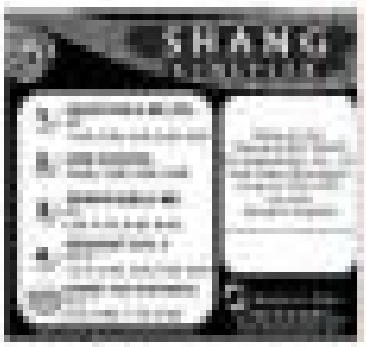
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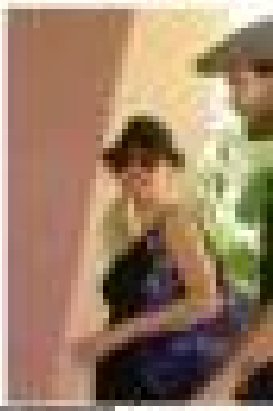

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IMAX

'Sweet' starlet's nasty side shows

By the Entertainment staff

PRETTY STARLET plays sweet starlets on screen. In real life, she is a venomous villain, according to Western star.

VE reinvented Isaac PE gave Doreen Samson dagger looks during a gathering, in front of several people, including top executives.

PE is called "Isaac Gimenez" by colleagues. Lester Cuenca has lower lips, too. Tats all know what Isaac lips do to ships.

War of TV execs

A direct war is simmering in the studio and Network Exec 1 is stressed. Rumor has it that Network Exec 1 is pitching for headcount—including MEs.

NE1 complained to big bosses about NE2's hate campaign. Problem is, NE2 had NE1 promoted right before the problem started. Who then is a terrified rumor on NE2's part? NE1 can't claim that NE2 is unfair. Management 101!

Starwars redux

The whole of show town seems to be in a pugnacious mood. Claudine Barretto vs Angelica Panganiban; Arnaldito Avanzado vs Angeli Pangilinan; Alfred Vargas vs Bella Padilla. Now here's free coverage to erstwhile friend Mariel Rodriguez.

At the press con for a new ABS-CBN show, "Talker at Ako," Toni answered reporters by opening up about her falling out with friend. Toni didn't just dwadla, but didn't hide her disappointment, either. She even texted during, she complained. "I've now more careful about getting too close to people. I hardly know. I don't want to get hurt anymore."

Alyna's anatomy

The day-one under-treatment of a fitness star in the press con for her new ABS-CBN show "Alyna," Shaina Magdayao had to address the wild rumor concerning her alleged hospital visit due to a bedroom mishap (discreetly called "vag bark" in a Viet report).

She was "sad" that the "anti-green" rumor had spread like wildfire. She said the tsismis tale might be traceable to an episode of "Grey's Anatomy," a US medical drama. "The rumor-mongers watch too much TV," she said. "Why would John Lloyd (Cruz) and I go to a public hospital where we are celebrities?"

(Go ahead, girl... tell us.)

Dingdong's defense

Dingdong Dantes exulted in clubmal girl, friend Marian Rivera, who is under fire for purportedly maltreating "Endless Love" costar Bela Padilla. Mattan is allegedly jealous, Bela being close to Dingdong.

Dong sent a lengthy text message to the press, which read in part: "I am saddened by the false accusations... which I feel are unfair and... totally blown out of proportion... I will be [blank] and, beside her, send roses in front of her in fulfilling her dreams... Our relationship is as it remains... From heaven, we will direct our attention to more important matters." (We bet this is helping the ratings.)

DIANA Magbanua: Why?

TONI Gonzaga: What, no drama?

Top of the Tabloids

The top shots his stories to become tabloid headers last week. (And why we are stoned, if you are stoned.)

- Kahit dose ay pagkaboreo ni Claudine Barretto, Angelica Panganiban kontoka na ng bodyguard. (Lovely not enough?)
- Payanat: Santiago, Claudine nagkaka-tabasan na? (Sana-on, tokahehan, actually.)
- BC Concepcion, Pinky Bustad gudtong magkaaaay? (Like BF-GF or DFO?)
- Bela Padilla ini-confirm ni Kathniyan si Marian Rivera. (Please just go ahead and go on event, girls.)
- Mattan nandoon si Claire de la Fuente. (Anyong?)
- Mattan kinumpirma ni Sita totka sikreto si Bela. (Sito pacita.)
- Mattan kapitahoon ang pakikipagkuri kay Bela. (Pahhhn.)
- Kinalong Ogie Alcasid Regine Velasquez mag asbit? (Ito naman! Everybody bask in square one—secrecy and suspense!)
- Mahaba-haba nag magpakasal Agegate—Oga't Quest na...)
- Edu Manzano, Pinky Mak magpakasal na si LTO Abalajah na ako.)
- Isinah Hermosa ipaw kinipot si TVS. (Sorbet call, isit?)
- Isinah Opa Amahdy ako kina Isaac Mabby at Gees Montes. (Sosa, ala a bet call.)
- Julius Magdangal Manik na akong mahawak-Mandy last call—with a check help.)
- Magkakatay Shaina Magdayao-John Lloyd Cruz are scandal shakwasakot (Kahit kakompo nito?)
- Shaina Gamma Mahirap magjog mandoo! (Oh fool.)
- Dingdong Dantes-nadismay sa kompalan ni Marian. (Ominous. It's a law of nature.)